■ BUSINESS / B1

First quarter budget gap lower than expected

■ WORLD / A26

Rove's role diminished in revamp

■ METRO / A23

Fashion designer, companion found dead inside car

■ NEWS / A2

Senators back GMA bid to kill death penalty

Customs runs after Tohs but admits no solid proof

TOH LOY ANG IMBESTIGASYON

By Armand N. Nocum and Cynthia D. Balana

CUSTOMS OFFICIALS have started to lower the boom on suspected big-time smugglers said to have links to First Gentleman Mike Arroyo

CUSTOMS/ A6

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PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Friday, April 21, 2006 ★★ 7 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 132 P18 website: www.inq7.net

2 Filipinos 'admitted' Saudi slays, says DFA

By Volt Contreras

TWO FILIPINOS ARRESTED IN JEDDAH, SAUDI Arabia, have "admitted" to killing three of their six compatriots who were earlier reported missing and whose disappearance coincided with the discovery of chopped-up body parts two weeks ago.

The Department of Foreign Affairs last night said the two prime suspects implicated two more

2 FILIPINOS/ A20

SC strikes down EO 464

Senators praise justices, claim win

By TJ Burgonio

PRAISE FROM THE SENATE YESTERDAY greeted the Supreme Court's ruling upholding Congress' right to compel the appearance of executive officials at its inquiries.

Senators who had locked horns with Malacañang over controversial Executive Order No. 464 of President Macapagal-Arroyo hailed the ruling as a sign of a working democracy and an independent judiciary.

They said it was both a vindication of the Senate, which had petitioned the high court to declare the order unconstitutional, and a slap on the Arroyo administration, which enforced it on Sept. 28, 2005.

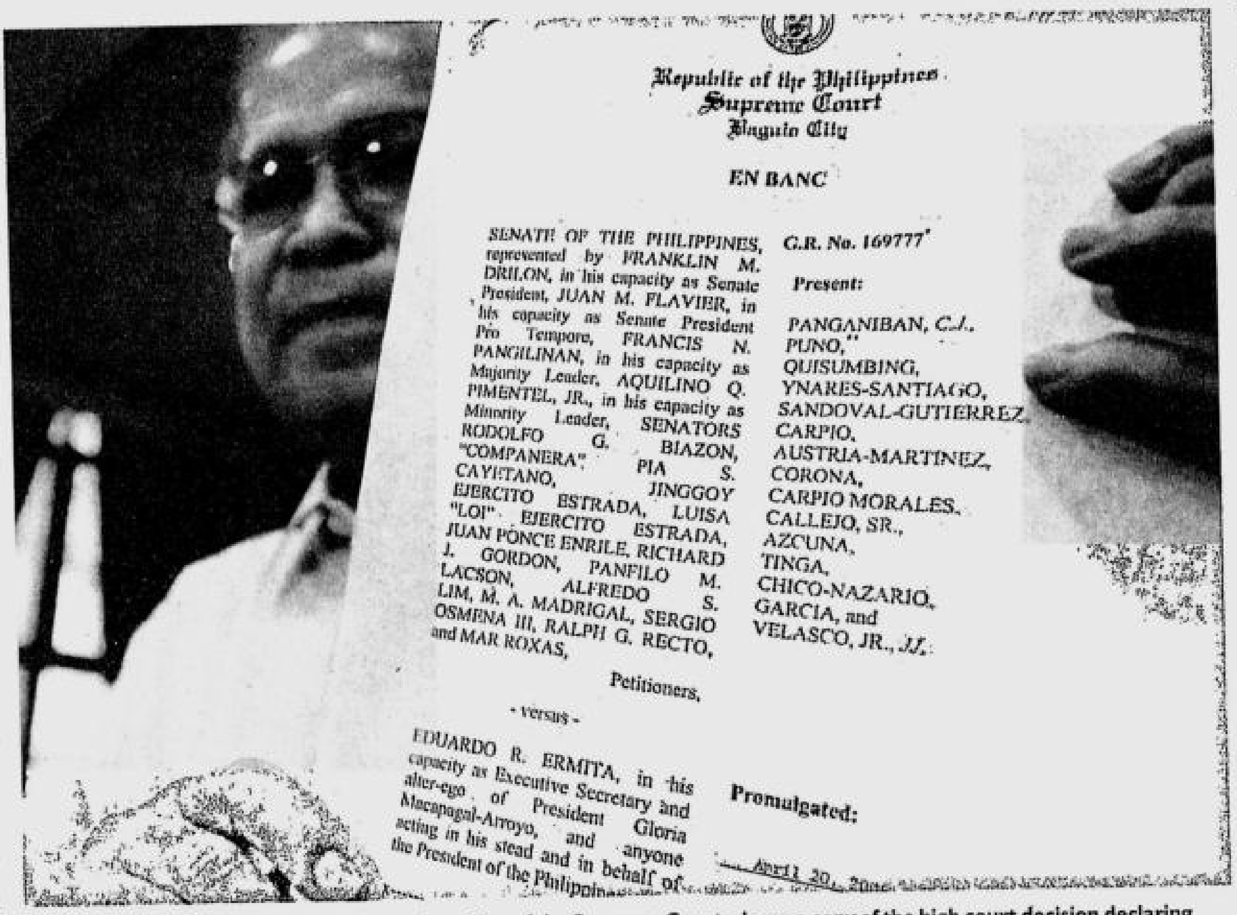
Members of the House majority said the ruling proved that democracy was at work in the country, and called on Malacañang to promptly abide by it.

Militant groups said it compensated for the purported negative impact of the tribunal's ruling on Wednesday upholding the unified identification card system being pushed by Malacañang.

But later, Sanlakas described it as a "pyrrhic victory."

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, chair of the national defense committee inquiring into the "Hello Garci" wiretapping scandal, bluntly said: "I consider this a reprimand for the hasty adoption of controversial policies by the executive department."

SENATORS/ A8



Republic of the Philippines
Supreme Court
Baguio City

EN BANC

SENATE OF THE PHILIPPINES, represented by FRANKLIN M. DRILON, in his capacity as Senate President, JUAN M. FLAVIER, in his capacity as Senate President Pro Tempore, FRANCIS N. PANGILINAN, in his capacity as Majority Leader, AQUILINO Q. PIMENTEL, JR., in his capacity as Minority Leader, SENATORS RODOLFO G. BIAZON, "COMPANERA" PIA S. CAYETANO, JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA, LUISA "LOI" EJERCITO ESTRADA, JUAN PONCE ENRILE, RICHARD J. GORDON, PANFILO M. LACSON, ALFREDO S. LIM, M. A. MADRIGAL, SERGIO OSMENA III, RALPH G. RECTO, and MAR ROXAS,

Petitioners,

G.R. No. 169777

Present:

PANGANIBAN, C.J.,
PUNO,"
QUISUMBING,
YNARES-SANTIAGO,
SANDOVAL-GUTIERREZ,
CARPIO,
AUSTRIA-MARTINEZ,
CORONA,
CARPIO MORALES,
CALLEJO, SR.,
AZCUNA,
TINGA,
CHICO-NAZARIO,
GARCIA, and
VELASCO, JR., JJ.

- versus -

EDUARDO R. ERMITA, in his capacity as Executive Secretary and alter-ego of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, and anyone acting in his stead and in behalf of the President of the Philippines

Promulgated:

April 20, 2006

ISMAEL Khan, chief of the public information office of the Supreme Court, shows a copy of the high court decision declaring Executive Order No. 464 unconstitutional.

EDWIN BACASMAS

High court votes 14-0 to uphold solons' right

By Armand N. Nocum and Christine O. Avendaño

THE SUPREME COURT YESTERDAY upheld the right of lawmakers to compel the appearance of executive officials at congressional inquiries, and stressed that the issue involving Executive Order No. 464 pertained not only to Congress' right to know but also the people's right to take part in government affairs.

The tribunal voted 14-0. Associate Justice Reynato Puno is on leave.

But it declared constitutional President Macapagal-Arroyo's right to ban executive officials from appearing during the question hour in both the Senate and the House of Representatives.

For over six months, the order banning the appearance of department heads and other officials of the executive branch at congressional investigations without the President's approval had put Malacañang on a collision course with the Senate.

For the full text of the decision, go to www.inq7.net/verbatim/sc_eo_464.pdf

It had been a major flash point for verbal skirmishes between the two independent, but supposedly collaborative, bodies.

EO 464 had been casually invoked by even low-ranking Cabinet and military officials in order to evade the Senate inquiries into the "Hello Garci" wiretapping scandal, the alleged P728-million fertilizer scam, the supposed overpriced $503-million NorthRail project and Proclamation No. 1017, among other controversial issues.

The order was issued on the day then

SC STRIKES/ A8

First 'casualties' of gag order feel vindicated

By Dona Pazzibugan

THE FIRST "CASUALTIES" OF MALACAÑANG'S gag order, otherwise known as Executive Order No. 464, welcomed the ruling of the Supreme Court.

Retired Marine Brig. Gen. Francisco Gudani and Lt. Col. Alexander Balutan, who are facing court-martial for defying Executive Order No. 464 when they testified at a Senate inquiry into the "Hello Garci" scandal on Sept. 28, 2005, felt vindicated by the high court's ruling.

The scandal stemmed from wiretapped telephone conversations in which President Macapagal-Arroyo allegedly directed former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano to rig the 2004 presidential election in her favor. Ms Arroyo has denied any wrongdoing.

The lawyer of Gudani and Balutan said the Supreme Court affirmed their contention that EO 464 was illegal.

Malacañang issued EO 464 last Sept. 28 to preempt the testimonies of a number of military officials who had been summoned by the Senate earlier that day.

While the top brass obeyed Ms Arroyo's verbal order to disregard the Sen-

FIRST/ A6

Rejection warning to Palace adventurists

By Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

COMMENTARY

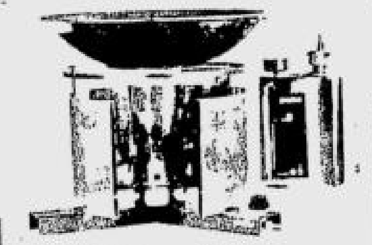
MALACAÑANG APOLOGISTS HAD been singing "executive privilege" like a mantra.

Knowing some of them to be intelligent people, I really don't think I should believe that they believed what they were singing. The brazenness of Executive Order No. 464 was so obvious that even first year students in my Constitutional Law classes could already detect its fatal flaws.

The President, who is not a lawyer, was ill served by her advisers. For her own sake and for the sake of the nation, the President needs counselors who can stand up to dispute even her most strongly held convictions.

Lawyers throughout the country, on hearing about the Supreme Court decision, must have heaved a collective sigh of relief. After hearing or reading about the oral arguments before the Supreme Court, legal observers were awaiting, almost with bated breath, how the Court would resolve this major challenge from the executive department against sepa-

REJECTION/ A6



PROTOS: Coconut oil, too

Stove fueled by 'tuba-tuba' launched in Leyte

By Vicente S. Labro
PDI Visayas Bureau

BAYBAY, LEYTE—AN ENVIRONMENT-friendly cooking stove that uses coconut oil and other plant oils like those from the "tuba-tuba" or Jatropha is now being sold in Leyte.

The stove, called Protos, resembles a kerosene pressure stove and can also use kerosene. But its manufacturer, Bosch and Siemens Home Appliances Group (BSH), is pushing for the use of plant oils, which are cheap and environmentally friendly.

"The plant oil stove is easy to operate and offers a very safe cooking environment because plant oil can neither burn nor explode," said Dr. Elmar Stumpf, BSH plant oil stove project manager.

Sisinio Balaga, 56, a resident of Baybay town and a user of the plant

STOVE/ A20

Palace orders implementation of ID system

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO YESTERDAY ordered the immediate implementation of the national identification card system a day after the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the project.

Malacañang executives want a national ID to be a mandatory requirement in all government transactions and will encourage the private sector to require the same.

"President Arroyo has given the go-signal to the Cabinet to get the ID system in one form or another and this is the way we can keep up with the rest of the world," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye.

Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor said the ID system would be up and running in a few months. He said the National Economic and Development Authority, which would oversee the project, had been given less than 30 days to come up with its mechanics.

While Defensor said the databases of both the Social Security System and Government Service and Insurance System would simply be merged, Neda chief Romulo Neri said the national ID system would include data from the Commission on Elections and PhilHealth.

Defensor explained that the goal was to synchronize all state-issued IDs with all citizens expected to have one

PALACE ORDERS/ A21

Fil-Am starts LIFE, vows to plant 1M trees

By Blanche S. Rivera

SO MANY PEOPLE ASK A LOT OF QUESTIONS and still end up without answers. One man, a Filipino-American, asked one question and found the path to life.

All Bienvenido Eusebio, 70, wanted to know three years ago was: "Are we being good stewards of God's creation?"

That one question brought him back home to the Philippines after 10 years in Indonesia and 30 years in the United States to launch the La Sallian Institute for the Environment (LIFE).

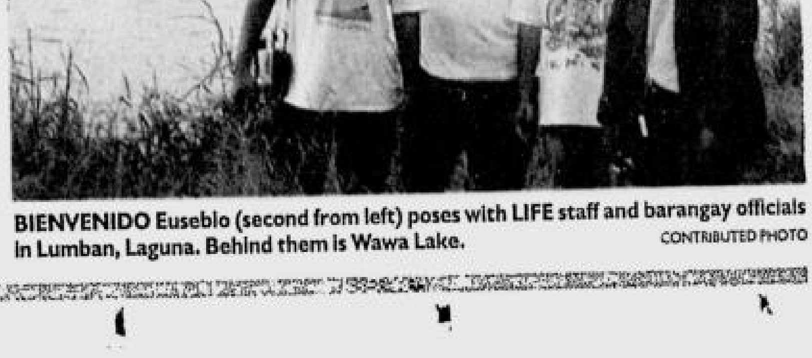
LIFE, an institute with only five staff members, is now all set to plant a million trees that could spell the difference for the country's rapidly disappearing forests.

Eusebio, LIFE's volunteer executive director, will offer up a certificate bearing LIFE's pledge during a Mass by Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales to launch the Earth Day celebration at the former Smokey Mountain dump in Tondo, Manila, tomorrow.

De La Salle Philippines, through LIFE, has committed to plant a million trees by 2011, the educational institution's centennial anniversary in the country. The planting season starts in June.

"This can't happen overnight ... but we think this is possible if everyone plants," said Eusebio, citing La Salle's more than 100,000 alumni and 50,000 students.

FIL-AM/ A19



BIENVENIDO Eusebio (second from left) poses with LIFE staff and barangay officials in Lumban, Laguna. Behind them is Wawa Lake.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scatterd rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening. SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO, PDI RESEARCH/04/20/06

Second FRONT PAGE

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UNBURNED BOOTS

An Army soldier goes through assorted combat boots saved from the fire that gutted a building in the Army headquarters in Fort Bonifacio early yesterday. The building caught fire at around 3:15 a.m. and arson investigators are still trying to determine the cause of the fire. REM ZAMORA

Senators back GMA bid vs death penalty

By Juliet Labog Javellana and Michael Lim Ubac

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO'S MOVE TO ASK CONGRESS to pass a law to abolish the death penalty has gained the support of Senate leaders, even her most vehement critics.

Sen. Joker Arroyo said he intends to immediately convene the Senate justice committee to tackle the measure.

Arroyo, an administration senator who often positions himself against the President on certain issues, called on his Senate colleagues to support the President's policy to commute death sentences and repeal the Death Penalty Law even if some of them have called for her resignation.

"You cannot inject politics in everything that Gloria does. This is an issue that deserves bipartisan support," Arroyo said in a phone interview.

He rejected criticisms that the commutation policy was meant to court the support of the Church leaders who recently rejected the Malacañang-backed people's initiative to amend the 1987 Constitution.

A mother

"To the credit of Gloria, not one person was executed during her term. She is a woman, she is a mother," Arroyo said.

He also credited the President for giving Congress an opportunity to debate on a "more important issue."

"For once we will have a very serious and compelling issue for debate. There will be a great debate because I expect there will be others who want to retain the death penalty," Arroyo said.

Senate President Franklin Drilon and Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr., who strongly oppose Ms Arroyo's continued rule but are firmly against capital punishment, indicated they would support the repeal of the law.

House leaders who favor capital punishment, though dismayed by the President's move to certify as urgent a consolidated House bill seeking to abolish capital punishment, felt bound to set the approval process in motion.

Majority Leader Prospero Nograles said House Bill 4826 had been approved on committee level and was in fact at the top of the House agenda even before Ms Arroyo made the announcement commuting all death sentences to life imprisonment in her Easter message last week.

Fast-tracked

"We will have it debated on the floor as soon as we resume sessions in May," said Nograles, adding that the bill's approval would be "fast-tracked."

The President on Wednesday announced that she had certified as urgent a House measure proposing the abolition of Republic Act 7659, the law passed in 1994 prescribing death for heinous crimes.

However, Nograles and another majority coalition leader, Cebu Rep. Antonio Cuenco, appealed to the President to reconsider her position on the death penalty, saying a majority of lawmakers still favored the retention of the RA 7659.

Nograles suggested that the death penalty be retained for two heinous crimes—drugs and terrorism.

"Drug lords and terrorists have caused so much havoc in this country and therefore they should be exempted" from executive commutation or from coverage by a law abolishing the death sentence, said Nograles.

"Personally, I would want drug lords to die by lethal injection because they are unforgiving to our youth and they destroy our country," Nograles said.

Selective commutation

Cuenco said he respected the move of the President, "but the more cogent and judicious position should have been a selective commutation and not a general and wholesale one."

"If drug traders and rapists escape the death chamber and punishment during my lifetime, that would be most repulsive and objectionable that I would be jolted even in the afterlife," Cuenco said.

If the death penalty were to be abolished, Cuenco believes "Congress will revive it in due time."

Pimentel, the author of Senate Bill 1143 which seeks to impose 30 years' imprisonment instead of death on crimes covered by the Death Penalty Law, said he was "in full accord" with the President's conviction that convicted criminals must be given a chance to reform.

"If that is the President's intention, although we are not political allies, then she is on the right track on her plan to certify the bill," said Pimentel, adding that 15 other senators support his bill.

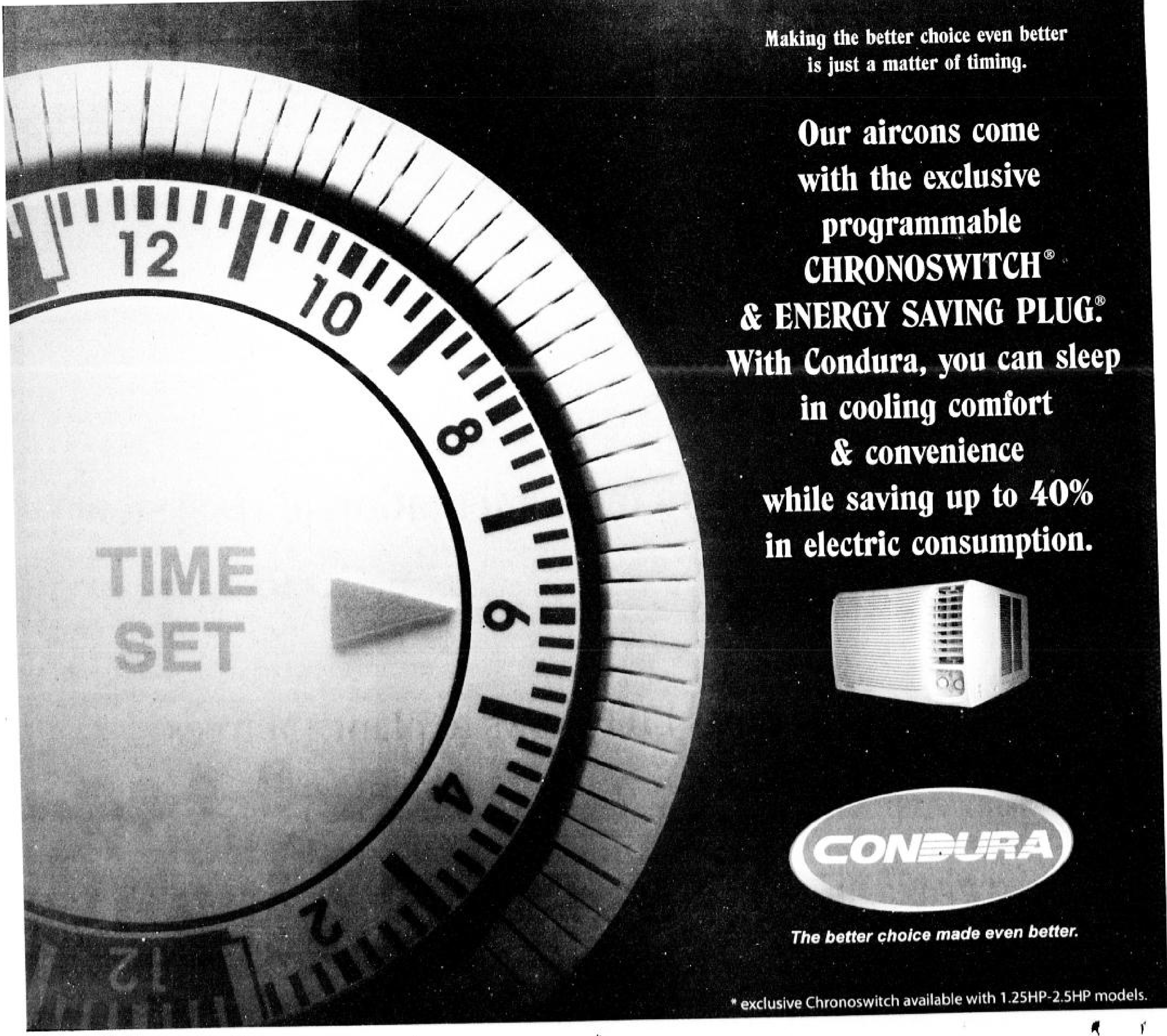
Drilon declined to comment on the President's action but said he was for the abolition of the death penalty and would continue to do so.

The anti-crime group Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption has vowed to take head-on the move to abolish the Death Penalty Law.

The 10,000-strong VACC, whose membership includes relatives of heinous crime victims, said it would go to Congress and beg lawmakers to defer the abolition of RA 7659.

"We will kneel down before them if necessary," said VACC founding chair Dante Jimenez.

The European Union and rights watchdog Amnesty International yesterday applauded the President's pledge to commute all death sentences. *With a report from Tarra V. Quismundo and AFP*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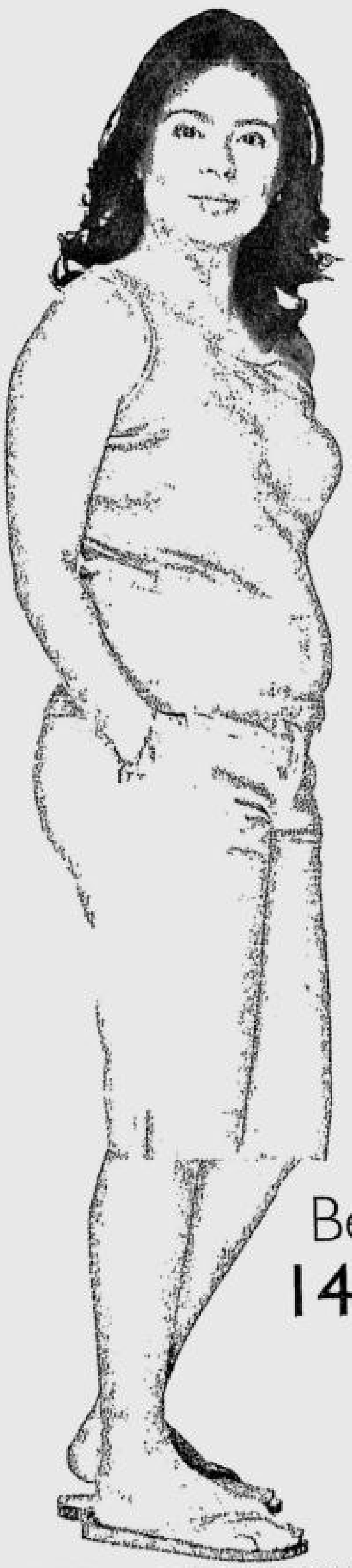

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S.E. Asian gov'ts asked to do more vs terror

CEBU CITY—SOUTHEAST ASIAN governments must do more to stop cross-border funding for terrorist groups, the head of the UN Security Council's committee on counterterrorism told an international antiterrorism forum here yesterday.

While most of these countries have put in place antimoney laundering measures and financial intelligence units following the 9/11 attacks, there is slower progress in prosecuting those responsible, said Ellen Margrethe Loj, who is also Denmark's ambassador to the United Nations.

Intelligence agencies in the region now have an "appreciation of the ways in which funds from organized crime may be channeled to support terrorist organizations in a manner similar to that seen in other regions of the world," she said.

However, "progress has been much slower in relation to laws criminalizing the financing of terrorism," with more than half the countries failing to enact such laws.

Nearly half of the 10-member Association of South East Asian Nations have yet to ratify the international convention concerning the financing of terrorism.

"Even once this is done, one of the key challenges in this area will be responding to the ways in which terrorist organizations find new, unregulated ways of channeling funds," Loj said.

As financial institutions tighten their watch on suspect funds, terrorist groups could tap other means to move money, such as channeling funds through religious or charitable organizations, she said.

LOJ: "Slow progress in prosecution"

Loj did not give specific figures as to how much laundered money actually gets into terrorist hands, but intelligence experts have said that Islamic militant groups in the region have been helping each other in funding.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, in a message read by Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, urged the 300-plus delegates from 60 countries to "keep terrorists at bay" and boost cooperation. She stressed they must also "find a middle way to address the socio-economic and political underpinnings of terrorism."

Al-Qaida mastermind Osama bin Laden is believed to have once used religious schools and Islamic relief organizations to hand over funds to Abu Sayyaf militants in Mindanao.

Philippine authorities have also arrested several Indonesian militants who confessed to being bagmen for the Jemaah Islamiyah operations in Mindanao, where officials believe they train with local rebels.

Former AFP Chief of Staff Benjamin Defensor said the three-day conference's main goal was to find policies that address the causes of terrorism. He said delegates would also consider how developing countries might strike a balance between counterterrorism moves and protecting their cultures and religions.

East Timor Foreign Minister Jose Ramos-Horta, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, urged governments to strike a balance between fighting the scourge of terrorism and protecting civil liberties and human rights.

"We must not become monsters ourselves in order to defeat the monster, states must not sanction state terror to allegedly fight terror," he said.

"The superior morality of the rule of law, democratic and transparent government and respect for diversity are the most powerful weapons against extremism and intolerance."

Correction

ON PAGE A7 of the INQUIRER's April 13 issue, Associate Justice Salvador Valdez was erroneously reported as having penned a Supreme Court decision suspending Judge Alfredo Kallos of Regional Trial Court Branch 10 for brokering a real estate deal. The decision was penned by Justice Antonio Carpio of the Supreme Court's 3rd Division. Associate Justice Valdez (now retired) handled the case at the Court of Appeals. In the Supreme Court, the case was resolved by the 3rd Division, not the 2nd Division.

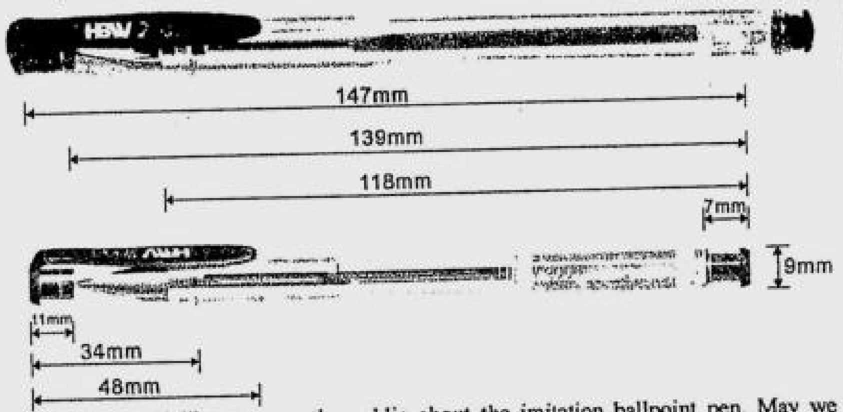
* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94

WARNING TO THE PUBLIC

"HBW 2000" is a brand name and trademark of high quality imported ballpoint pens manufactured abroad and distributed by **HBW Enterprises,** with offices located at Suite 1003 Tytana Plaza, Plaza Lorenzo Ruiz, Binondo, Manila. **HBW Enterprises** has pending patent applications for its Industrial Design, as well as the Trademark, with the Intellectual Property Office, with Application Serial No. 03-2006-000012.

It has come to the attention of **HBW Enterprises** that a ballpoint pen using the same design has appeared in the market. The size, color and appearance of the product are similar to the original **HBW 2000**. To guide the consumer, below is an illustration of the ballpoint pen.



We would like to warn the public about the imitation ballpoint pen. May we advise the general public not to purchase the imitation **HBW 2000** ballpoint pen. To be sure, purchase **HBW 2000** ballpoint pens only from authorized and reputable dealers and outlet stores.

As for those who trade in the imitation **HBW 2000** ballpoint pen, this is a clear case of patent infringement, a criminal activity which carries with it penal as well as civil sanctions under R.A. 8293, and related laws, rules and regulations. We have enlisted the aid of various law enforcement agencies and legal action is forthcoming. Cease and desist now or face the consequences.

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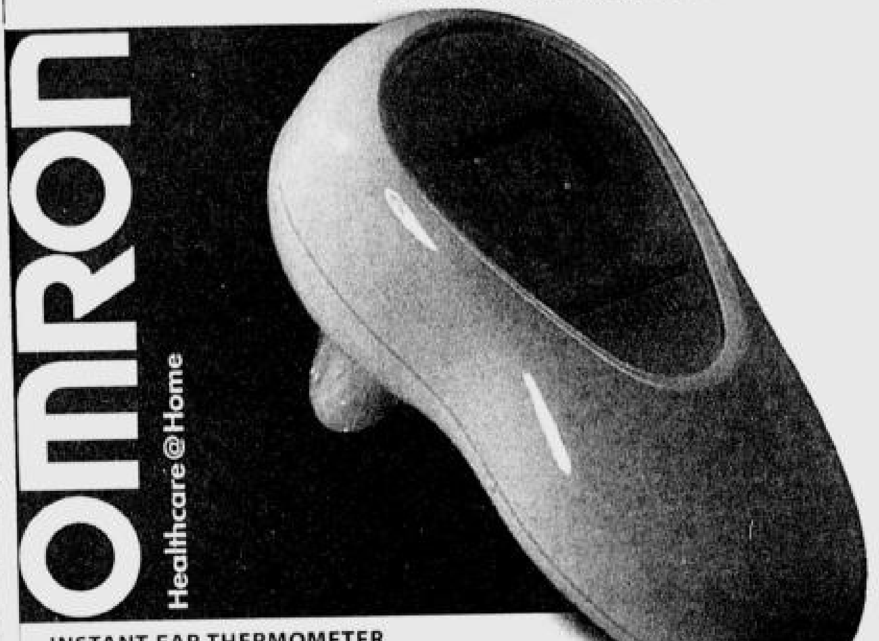

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The new Arellano lawyers will be feted in a testimonial celebration on Saturday, May 6, 2006 after the Thanksgiving Mass at 4:00 p.m. at the Arellano Law Complex along Taft Avenue corner Menlo Street.
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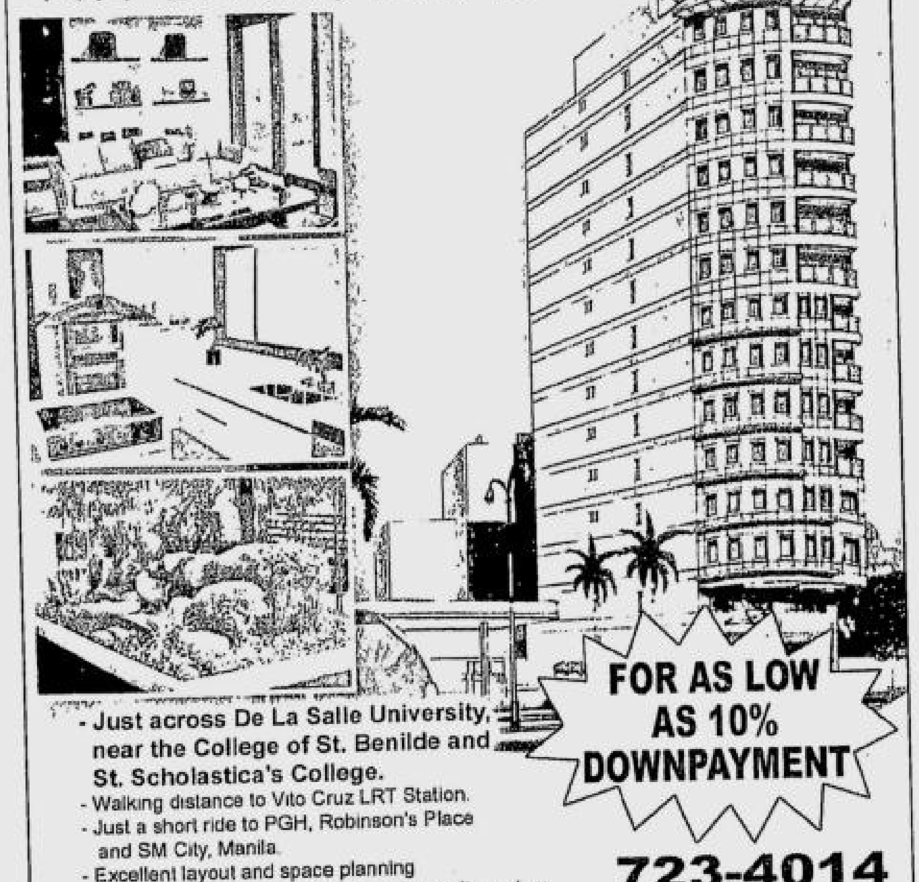

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Mining firm chided for false claim

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

ENVIRONMENT SECRETARY ANGELO REYES yesterday denied renewing the exploration permit of Manila Mining Corp. (MMC), an affiliate of Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co.

This after newspaper and wire reports, including the INQUIRER, said on April 18 that the mining firm had been given government approval to start exploration of a 750-hectare gold field in Surigao del Norte.

Class A shares of Manila Mining—or those sold only to Filipinos—closed higher on April 18 at three centavos, up from 2.9 centavos the previous day. On April 19, the price fell to 2.8 centavos and closed yesterday at 2.9 centavos.

Saying the company's claim had misled investors, Reyes yesterday wrote Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) chair Fe Barin asking that MMC be investigated and the appropriate charges filed against the company.

Reyes said MMC's exploration permit, No. XIII-014, covering its Kalayaan gold project was still pending in his office, awaiting final approval.

He denied that Environment Undersecretary for Mining Demetrio L. Ignacio had given MMC clearance to inform its stockholders about the approval of its exploration permit.

Earlier, Manila Mining said Environment Assistant Secretary Jeremias Dolino, concurrently Bureau of Mines and Geosciences director, had renewed its exploration permit on Nov. 30, 2005, but that MMC was still waiting for its copy.

The permit was purportedly forwarded to Reyes for notation.

For his part, Dolino said that DENR Memorandum Order No. 2005-20 required that "all applications for exploration permits filed prior to Aug. 26, 2006, shall be cleared with the environment secretary."

MMC's application was filed on July 16, 2004, but encountered opposition from residents of Barangay Anislagan in Placer, Surigao del Norte.

Reyes said that all permits were being reviewed by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources since President Macapagal-Arroyo wanted the mining sector revitalized through the enforcement of responsible and environmentally sound practices.

In his letter to the SEC chair, Reyes said "MMC's false announcement is misleading and its subsequent speculative effects in the PSE [Philippine Stock Exchange] is an irresponsible act for a publicly listed company and does not sit well with the government's efforts to revitalize the mining industry."

MMC refused to comment when contacted for this story.

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Reyes: RP still open to investors in mining

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE GOVERNMENT HAS ASSURED FOREIGN investors that the Philippine mining industry would remain open to foreign firms despite the Congressional review of the Mining Act of 1995 and strong opposition by the influential Catholic Church.

Environment Secretary Angelo T. Reyes said Congress would no longer debate over the ownership issue because the Supreme Court has already ruled that it was constitutional for foreign firms to operate mining projects in the country.

Speaking before the Australia-New Zealand Chamber of Commerce, Reyes said his "understanding" from House Speaker Jose de Venecia was that the review of the Mining Law would focus on the strengthening of the environmental provisions and ensuring the safety of existing and proposed projects.

"I assure you that the ongoing review will not result in any revocation or ownership changes because the Supreme Court has already ruled on this issue and has allowed foreign-controlled corporations to participate in the exploration, development and utilization of our minerals resources," Reyes said during the chamber's monthly meeting on April 18.

Unduly alarmed

The DENR chief said he was aware that the pastoral statement of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) urging the repeal of the Mining Act and the revocation of existing mining licenses had "unduly alarmed" the investors.

Reyes said that while the bishops enjoyed "some influence over the people" in this predominantly Catholic country, they had no legal mandate.

"Instead of repealing the Mining Act, the government agreed to a Congressional review of the law because we are confident that we have the best mining law," Reyes said, citing international recognition for the environmental protection mechanisms in the Mining Act of 1995.

He said the renewed clamor of the bishops and some non-government organizations for the revocation of all mining permits was triggered by the Rapu-Rapu tailings spills in October last year.

The incidents had a major impact on the efforts of government to prove the case for responsible mining after the infamous mine spills at the Marcopper site in Marinduque in the 1990s.

"Our credibility in enforcing the Mining Act and all its environmental safeguards was seriously put in question," Reyes said.

The DENR had fined Lafayette Phils. Inc. P10.7 million for violation of the Clean Water Act.

Reyes expressed confidence that the lines of communication with anti-mining groups and the Catholic Church were still open, based on his recent dialogue with the bishops.

"If mining companies and their local stakeholders can prove to the bishops that what the anti-mining groups are telling them are wrong, then there might still be a chance that we can soften their stand," Reyes said.

Responsible mining practices

"This issue will not be solved by a series of debates on the pros and cons of developing our mineral resources. The government and the private sector must jointly prove their position with concrete examples of responsible mining practices," he added.

Reyes also denied reports that the government has imposed a moratorium on mining applications as a compromise to the bishops.

Former Environment Secretary and now Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor had announced in February that the government was imposing a moratorium on mining, but he later clarified that this was limited to mining applications in Bicol.

"There is no moratorium on mining. My department continues to process and approve mining applications in accordance with existing laws and streamlined procedures," Reyes stressed.

There are 1,400 applications for Mineral Production Sharing Agreement, 400 exploration permits and 59 Financial or Technical Assistance Agreement pending before the Mines and Geosciences Bureau.

The Arroyo government has been aggressively promoting the Philippines' mining potential abroad, selling 24 priority mine sites that are expected to gain $8 billion in investments.

Of the 24 priority mining projects, six have Australian or New Zealand interests. The six are expected to generate $926.4 million in foreign direct investments, $1.3 billion in revenues and 10,000 jobs.

"The government will continue to create the most conducive environment for businesses to thrive but we need your help to prove that we can make responsible mining work for the benefit of our people," he said.

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Rejection warning to Palace adventurists

From page A1

ration of powers and the public's right to know. Now they can breathe easy.

Before this, I myself was wondering what would be the substance of my conversation with Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban when he comes to the Ateneo Law School as graduation speaker on Sunday. I am now sure that he will be received most warmly by the Ateneo administration, faculty and law graduates.

I find the decision particularly gratifying coming, as it does, at a time when the executive department is openly defying a Supreme Court decision declaring that initiative and referendum cannot yet be used to propose a constitutional amendment because Congress has not yet passed an enabling law.

Warning to adventurists

The rejection of EO 464 should serve as a warning to executive department adventurists.

Most certainly, the issue of initiative and referendum will reach the Supreme Court. The Court will surely be asked to rule on whether the current signature campaign violates the Constitution, whether the Commission on Elections is defying the Supreme Court's injunction against it by taking cognizance of the signature campaign, and whether the change from a presidential to a parliamentary form of government is a revision or merely a collection of plural amendments, as the creative constitutionalism of the secretary of justice suggests.

But even before petitions on initiative and referendum reach the Court, there are still other issues awaiting resolution.

Proclamation 1017, CPR

The Court still has to decide a number of major challenges to what is perceived by many as executive abuse. Did the President try to deftly sidestep the 2004 decision on the import of a declaration of a "state of rebellion" by declaring instead a "state of emergency."

Did the President and her law enforcers, relying on Proclamation No. 1017, arrogate powers violative of constitutional rights? Is the policy of "calibrated preventive response" a violation of the right to assembly and petition? These are issues which test the limits of presidential power.

In an earlier column I wrote about the Court as a "legitimizer." In the darker pages of the history of our nation, there were lamentable instances when the Supreme Court gave its blessing to official action offensive to human rights and disruptive of constitutionalism.

As we continue to struggle to rebuild our democratic structures, the decision on EO 464 is a most welcome refreshing and invigorating breeze.

First 'casualties' of gag order feel vindicated

From page A1

ate summons, Gudani and Balutan went on to testify on irregularities in the elections in Lanao del Sur.

The two were promptly relieved of their posts as Philippine Military Academy assistant superintendent and deputy cadet corps commandant, respectively.

Article of War 65

They were also ordered to face court-martial proceedings for violating Article of War 65, which punishes the willful disobedience of a superior officer.

"The decision paves the way for the quick dismissal of the complaints against them (Gudani and Balutan). Justice has been truly served," lawyer Napoleon Poblador said upon learning of the high court's decision.

Poblador said his clients had petitioned the tribunal to stop the court-martial proceedings because "the basis is an order that is unconstitutional and illegal."

The case is in the pre-trial investigation stage.

First Gentleman

Gudani, who was commander of the 1st Marine Brigade based in Marawi City during the elections, testified that First Gentleman Juan Miguel Arroyo had distributed P500 million in Mindanao.

Gudani retired on Oct. 4.

Balutan, who was a battalion commander under Gudani during the elections, testified he was told to relax security during the crucial canvassing of votes after Gudani was inexplicably relieved as brigade commander.

Balutan, who is known within the elite Marine Corps as "Mandirigma" (Warrior) for his bravery in combat, has been in the "freezer" since Sept. 28.

A military spokesperson said the Supreme Court decision would not affect Gudani and Balutan's case because the two were charged with defying a direct order from the chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

"They were not charged for [defying] EO 464 but for defying a direct order from Gen. Generoso Senga. That's disobedience. So that's a different case," Maj. Gen. Jose Honrado said.

Honrado said the AFP would ask for the defense department's "interpretation" of the high court's ruling on EO 464 should officials be summoned to congressional hearings.

"If there is no legal constraint we have no choice but to follow [the congressional summons]. But it will be the DND [Department of National Defense] that will decide on that," he said.

RETIRED Brig. Gen. Francisco V. Gudani (right) and Col. Alexander F. Balutan testified before a Senate investigation on Sept. 28, 2005. PDI PHOTO

CUSTOMS Commissioner Napoleon Morales, along with RATS Executive Director Reynaldo Umali (left) and Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño, files before the justice department criminal charges against some 33 members of an alleged smuggling syndicate. REM ZAMORA

Customs runs after Tohs but admits no solid proof

From page A1

although they admitted they had no solid evidence against them, yet.

Commissioner Napoleon L. Morales told reporters yesterday that the Bureau of Customs had closed down customs bonded warehouses owned by Vicky Toh and had started a "100-percent examination" of all importations made by Lucio Lao Co.

Toh and Co, along with Samuel Lee, were alleged to be among the country's top smugglers during a recent Senate hearing. All three were said to be close to Arroyo, who has denied the claim.

"As far as the Tohs are concerned, we found that of the companies put up under their names, some remained dormant for three years now, so we closed them down ... lest they be used for smuggling activities," Morales said.

Investigations continuing

Morales stressed that the investigation of the Tohs was continuing. He said the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group and the National Bureau of Investigation were involved in the effort.

He said the bureau had strictly inspected Co's goods under its "enhanced post entry audit."

"We are conducting 100-percent examination on all his importations," he said. He added that his men were also "checking on the issue of misdeclaration and undervaluation" allegedly committed by Co.

Asked if the bureau had solid evidence against Co, Morales replied: "For now nothing yet, but now that the BOC has been alerted to it, all shipments consigned to Co are being examined 100 percent."

The CIDG has charged Lee with smuggling while the Bureau of Internal Revenue has charged him with tax evasion, although Morales admitted that they did not have the goods on Toh and Co yet.

The two have been accused of engaging in activities involving "technical smuggling, misclassification and undervaluation" of imported goods.

No case on basis of hearsay

"We cannot file cases on the basis of mere hearsay," said Morales at the news conference called to announce that the bureau's Run After Smugglers (RATS) program had filed its 14th smuggling case before the DOJ.

Yesterday, RATS agents charged several officials of One Logistics Inc., JPC Customs Brokerage, Options Logistics, Acestar International Service Corp., KSN Air and Sea Freight Co. Inc. and JBN Trucking with the smuggling of 15 containers of plastic resin in January 2006.

Tax evasion case

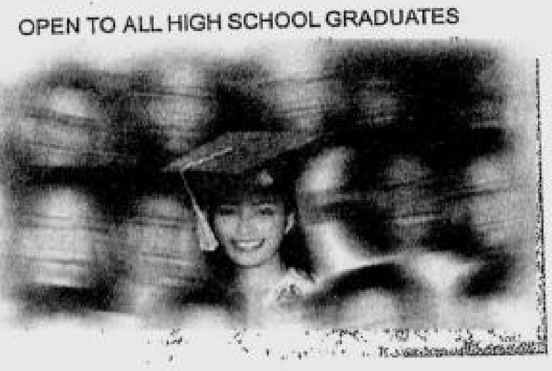
Also yesterday, the Bureau of Internal Revenue filed its 54th tax evasion case since the RATS program was launched in 2004. The case involved the nonpayment of P8.3 million allegedly since 2003.

Charged before the Department of Justice were two top executives of Padoson Stainless Steel Corp., Gerald Chan and Nenita Chan, president and treasurer, respectively, of PSSC.

PSSC is engaged in the manufacture, import, export, buying and selling of fabrication steel, stainless brass, zinc, aluminum and other metal alloys.

BIR Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag said PSSC had continued to operate although it had filed a letter of closure and cessation of business operations. Termination of the business took effect on June 5, 2002.

Buñag expressed confidence that the BIR would be able to meet its April tax collection target, and eventually its 2006 target of P675 billion.



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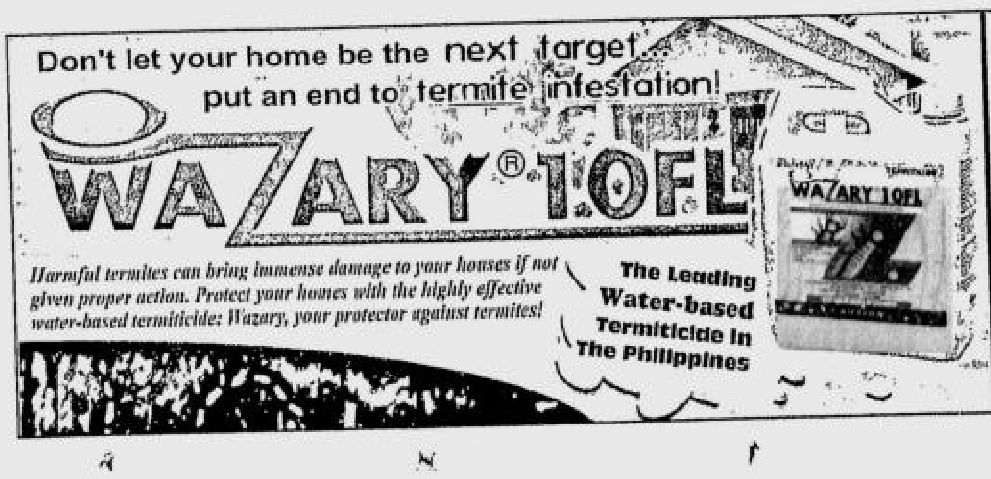

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Senators told to step on the gas on biofuels

By Philip C. Tubeza

"STEP ON THE GAS," BUKIDNON REP. JUAN Miguel Zubiri yesterday urged senators in asking them to immediately pass the proposed Biofuels Act.

In calling for quick action, Zubiri, principal author of the House version of the measure, said the country was in danger of losing one-fourth of its current gas supply from the Middle East because the row between the United States and Iran over the latter's nuclear program could erupt into a war.

He pointed out that the United Nations Security Council was considering slapping an embargo on Iran, which supplied "one in every four barrels of oil that enter into our country."

"Iran's 24.6 percent share of the Philippines country's annual oil imports is second only to Saudi Arabia's 56.3 percent. If there's an embargo against Iran, we will be having a hard time finding an alternative supplier," Zubiri said in a statement.

Hostage to turmoil

"We cannot forever be held hostage to turmoil and upheavals in the volatile Middle East. We cannot tie our country's fate to that region," he added.

The Senate is expected to hold debates on the proposed Biofuels Act after Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago sponsors it on the floor.

Zubiri said enactment of the measure would also be a signal to "at least a dozen investors" who were prepared to plunk in "billions of pesos" for factories that produced fuel out of plants. "The players are just waiting in the wings and are ready to go in once the regulatory framework is in place," he said.

Citing a report of the Biofuel Aliiance, Zubiri said six firms were in the "exploratory stage of venturing into ethanol projects."

The report identified the firms as Alcantara and Sons, Chemphil Group, Marubeni, the Teves Group of Negros Oriental , NU3 Food based in La Carlota City, Negros Oriental, the one in Pampanga led by the Cobarrubias family, and the Passi, Iloilo consortium of sugar planters.

"In addition, a foreign group, two sugar centrals, and two companies that would like to manufacture coconut-based biodiesel are also interested," he said.

"What would nudge them to throw their hat into the ring is the approval of the Senate of the biolfuels bill and its eventual signing into law ," he added.

Zubiri said that if the two companies decided to invest in biofuels, they "would join two early birds—the San Carlos ethanol plant and another one in sugar-growing Bukjdnon."

Zubiri said an ethanol plant cost P.15 billion to build, "and this explains the wait-and-see attitude of interested companies, which naturally would like to see a favorable investment terrain before they take the plunge."

Raft of perks

Zubiri said the bill offered investors "a raft of perks , including tax privileges, to those interested in making cheap, clean, VAT-free gas out of cane and coconut."

He said the bill would seek to replace within four years a tenth of the national gasoline consumption with ethanol.

This would start with the "mandatory blending of gasoline with five percent bioethanol" within two years after enactment of the law.

He added that this would lead to annual foreign exchange savings of P40 billion, Zubiri said an estimate based on the country's daily consumption of 320,000 barrels of oil, "at $65 a piece, using a P53 to US1 exchange rate."

He added that the country had enough land planted to crops that could guarantee a steady supply of biofuel.

"We have the means to ride on the alternative fuels boom. We have 2.4 million hectares planted to corn, 3.2 million hectares to coconut, 390 ,000 hectares to sugarcane, 330,000 to cassava and camote (sweet potato," Zubiri said.

However, Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo said developing alternative fuels would not be "enough to solve the country's energy problems."

"Contingency measures—that's how Malacañang plans to solve our deep energy problems. But there are simply no stopgaps for our oil crisis," Ocampo said.

"What we need is to repeal the failed Oil Deregulation Law, take matters in our own hands by buying back Petron, and controlling both petroleum prices and distribution," he added.

"What we are really up against are the questionable pricing practices of big and greedy oil companies like Royal Dutch Shell, ChevronTexaco-owned Caltex, and ExxonMobil. They jack up prices and distress our economy whenever they wish," Ocampo said.

Feds release Mancao from Florida detention

FORMER POLICE SENIOR SUPT. CEsar Mancao was released yesterday, a week after US federal agents arrested him at his Florida home as a material witness in the espionage case against his former colleague, Michael Ray Aquino.

An ANC report said Mancao, whose case has been attended to by Philippine consulate officials, has been allowed to leave the Federal Detention Center in North Miami Beach.

An earlier report said he was expected to be released on a $575,000 bail bond but it could not be immediately confirmed if indeed he was released on bail and who paid for the bond.

Mancao was arrested April 13 at this Florida home as a key witness in the case against Aquino and former FBI analyst Leandro Aragoncillo, whose case is being heard in New Jersey.

The two men were close aides of then Philippine National Police and now Sen. Panfilo Lacson. They were also linked to the double murder of public relations man Bubby Dacer and his driver.

"I'm OK. It's been a gruelling experience," he told ANC, saying he would make no further comment until the resolution of his case.

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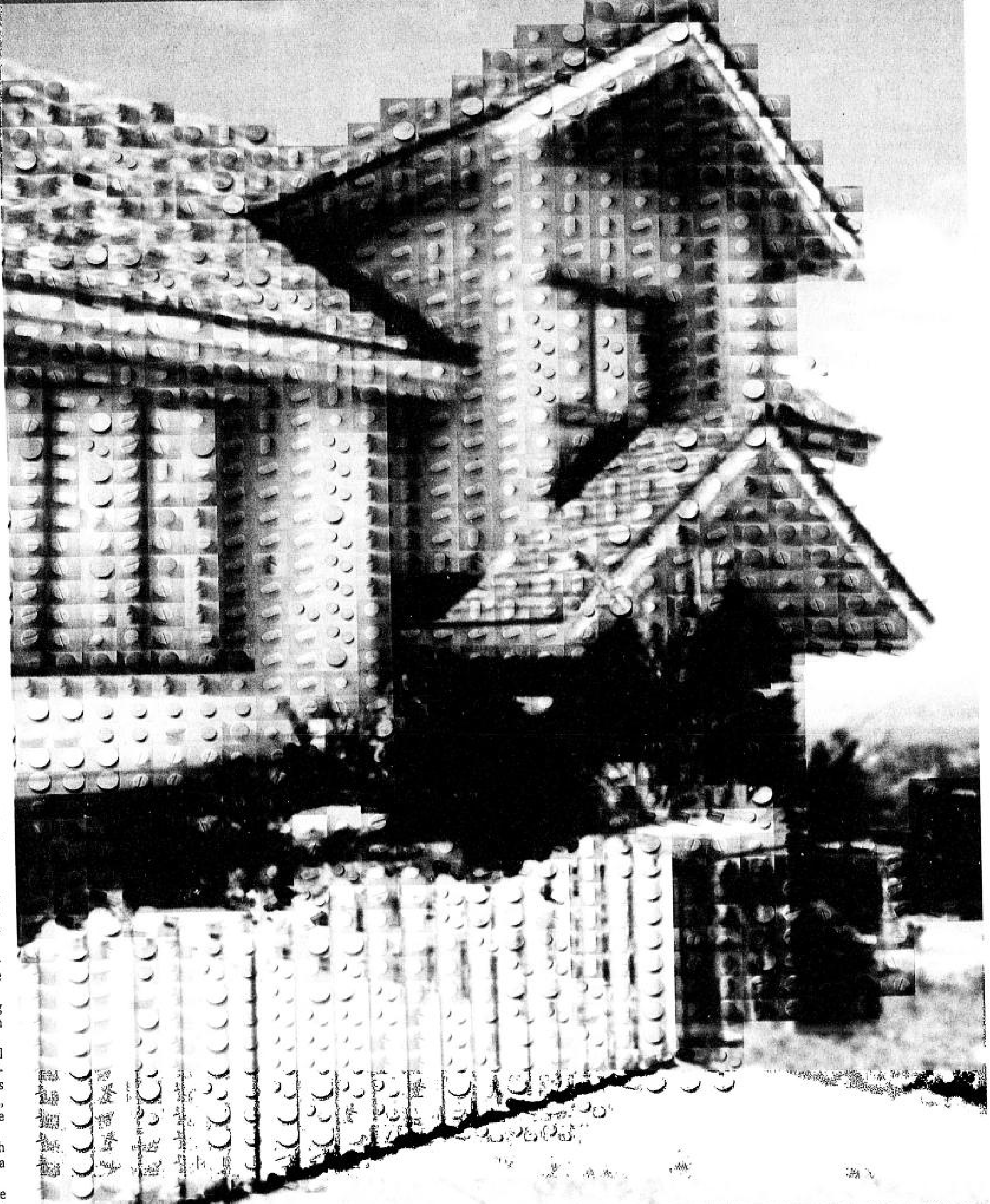

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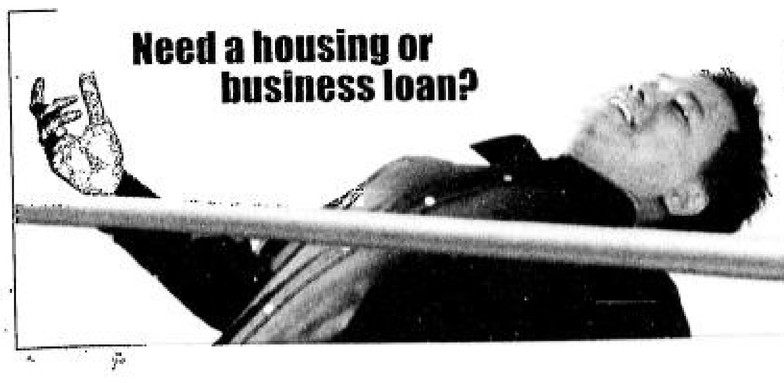

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SC strikes down EO 464

From page A1

Brig. Gen. Francisco Gudani and Col. Alexander Balutan testified before Sen. Rodolfo Biazon's national defense committee on alleged election cheating in Mindanao.

The two officers' appearance at the inquiry prompted the initiation of court-martial proceedings against them.

The following groups had petitioned to have EO 464 declared unconstitutional: 17 senators led by Senate President Franklin Drilon; party-list Representatives Satur Ocampo, Crispin Beltran, Liza Maza, Teodoro Casiño and Joel Virador; Courage, the alliance of government employees, and a group of lawyers called Counsels for the Defense of Liberties.

Former Solicitor General Francisco Chavez filed a separate petition assailing the legality of EO 464.

Appeal possible

Hours before the ruling was officially released, Malacañang said it respected and accepted it but might seek an appeal.

"We hope, however, that it will not be taken by certain members of Congress as a license to use their power to conduct inquiries as an avenue to harass public officials or to push a particular political agenda, as we have seen in the past," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said in a statement.

"We hope further that Congress' time is put to better use to finally approving the budget and working on other urgent legislation that have long been on the table, like the antiterror and ethanol bills," he said.

Michael Defensor, the President's chief of staff, said Solicitor General Antonio Eduardo Nachura would study the possibility of an appeal.

Defensor also said he did not think the government had lost with the ruling.

He said that through EO 464, the executive branch was able to "deliver its message" to the Senate and to the people: That the government would "not allow" members of the Cabinet to be "pilloried, embarrassed and insulted in the guise of an investigation which is actually a political witch-hunt."

Actually, he added, all members of the executive branch, including middle managers, should not be treated shabbily by lawmakers.

SUPREME Court justices in session

REM ZAMORA

'Impermissible'

In the ruling written by Associate Justice Conchita Carpio Morales, the high court described as "impermissible" the act of the President using EO 464 to deny Congress the right to conduct inquiries in aid of legislation.

"Resort to any means then by which officials of the executive branch could refuse to divulge information cannot be presumed valid," the tribunal said.

"Otherwise, we shall not have merely nullified the power of our legislature to inquire into the operations of government, but we shall have given up something of much greater value—our right as [a] people to take part in government," it said.

The 52-page ruling started thus: "A transparent government is one of the hallmarks of a truly republican state."

"Wherefore, the petitions are partly granted," the court said of its ruling declaring void Sections 2(b) and 3, which justify the ban on congressional appearances by top government officials under the "rule of confidentiality" and the "separation of powers under the Constitution."

The ban covers senior officials of the executive departments; generals, flag officers and other officers of the Armed Forces; Philippine National Police officials and other officials deemed covered by EO 464.

In ruling that Congress could compel these officials to testify in inquiries in aid of legislation, the high court said: "Congress undoubtedly has a right of information from the executive branch whenever it is sought in aid of legislation."

And if the Palace decides to "withhold such information on the ground that it is privileged, it must so assert it and state the reason therefore and why it must be respected," the tribunal said.

Question hour

On the matter of the question hour, the tribunal said the President was within her right to give prior consent to officials appearing therein.

It said the question hour did not relate to specific legislation but to congressional oversight relative to the implementation of laws.

"When Congress merely seeks to be informed on how department heads are implementing the statutes which it has issued, its right to such information is not as imperative as that of the President to whom, as Chief Executive, such department heads must give report of their performance as a matter of duty," the high court said.

And in keeping with the principle of the separation of powers, the high court said that in the question hour, Congress may only "request" the presence of top government officials.

In congressional hearings in aid of legislation, however, "the appearance is mandatory," it said.

Objective analysis

Thus, Section 1 and 2(a) covering such appearances are "valid," it added.

Defensor said that with EO 464 deemed unconstitutional, "members of the Cabinet will have to react accordingly based on our individual and objective analysis of the situation."

"If and when [a congressional inquiry] becomes a political witch-hunt, it will become an individual responsibility and accountability of each member not to attend if they so desire, or to attend if they feel they should," he told reporters.

"For example," Defensor added, "if the agriculture or agrarian reform secretary feels that [an inquiry] has become a political witch-hunt and he or she decides not to attend, that is his or her own lookout."

Defensor said that as far as he was concerned, "I would have no second thoughts about standing up and walking out [of an inquiry], and if they would have me arrested, that's their prerogative."

But he made it clear that the Palace did not want an "institutional war."

He also said the Palace was prompted to issue EO 464 because members of the Cabinet had felt at the time that the Senate was out to conduct a political witch-hunt when it announced it would continue its investigation of alleged cheating during the 2004 presidential election.

Voided provisions of EO 464

SECTION 3. Appearance of Other Public Officials Before Congress.—All public officials enumerated in Section 2 (b) hereof shall secure prior consent of the President prior to appearing before either House of Congress to ensure the observance of the principle of separation of powers, adherence to the rule on executive privilege and respect for the rights of public officials appearing in inquiries in aid of legislation.

Section 2b. Who are covered by executive privilege:

- Senior officials of executive departments who in the judgment of the department heads, generals and flag officers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and such other officers who in the judgment of the Chief of Staff are covered by the executive privilege;
- Philippine National Police (PNP) officers with rank of chief superintendent or higher and such other officers who in the judgment of the Chief of the PNP are covered by the executive privilege;
- Senior national security officials who in the judgment of the National Security Adviser are covered by the executive privilege; and
- Such other officers as may be determined by the President.

Senators praise justices, claim win

From page A1

And Sen. Joker Arroyo, who had orally argued the Senate's case against a battery of government lawyers, described the ruling as "predictable."

He said the high court could not have allowed the co-equality and the delicate balance of power between the President and Congress to be "impaired," or the "immutable doctrine of separation of powers and checks and balances so essential in our structure of government" to be "upset."

"Had the Supreme Court sustained the President, it would have ushered in a quasi-dictatorial presidency," the administration senator said in a statement.

"The President tried, the Senate opposed, the House stood idly by and the Supreme Court did its bounden duty," he said.

Victory

"This is a victory for the Senate," declared Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan.

"This affirms our power to conduct inquiries and compel Cabinet and other government officials to appear in our inquiries in aid of legislation," he said in a phone interview.

He added: "They can no longer invoke EO 464 when we issue subpoenas to them to appear in inquiries in aid of legislation."

Pangilinan downplayed the high court's declaration that Cabinet officials were barred from appearing at the question hour and that the President could invoke executive privilege.

He said the senators had never questioned these points.

"The upholding by the tribunal of Sections 1 and 2-A of EO 464 is not an issue considering that these sections are mere reiterations of a provision of the Constitution on the question hour and of the [high court's] rulings on executive privilege," he said.

"What was at issue," he said, was "the power of the legislature to compel Cabinet secretaries and other members of the executive branch to appear in hearings in aid of legislation under Section 21 Article 6 of the Constitution."

Confidence

Pangilinan and Senate President Franklin Drilon also lauded the tribunal for its ruling.

"It affirms our confidence in our judicial system. It is proof that Malacañang acted beyond the confines of the Constitution and must be made to account for its illegal act," Pangilinan later said in a statement.

"This decision validates the Senate's position that as an institution, we have the constitutional duty to act as a check on a wayward executive branch," he said.

In a statement, Drilon pointed out that the "patently and brazenly unconstitutional" EO would have been "disastrous to our democratic system."

"Indeed, I am glad that we have a Supreme Court that is prepared to uphold the Constitution at all times. I certainly appreciate [its] independence," he said.

"This decision should remind Malacañang that ours is still a government of laws and not of men. It should make the President realize that she cannot overstep constitutional boundaries, specifically those provided under the principle of separation of powers between branches of government, just to suit her personal agenda," he said.

Bad news for GMA

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said in a text message that the ruling brought "glad tidings" for the people and "bad news" for the President.

"It means that not all [Ms Arroyo] wants, she gets," Pimentel said, adding:

"She can't supplant Congress by issuing administrative and executive orders. The ruling should make her mature into the presidency, not only grow old in it."

Sen. Ralph Recto said the ruling stopped Malacañang from imposing "capital punishment" on the Senate.

"What has been made clear is that a constitutional branch can't be exterminated by a mere executive fiat," Recto said.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson said the President "should fire her legal advisers and whoever counseled her into believing that EO 464 is not constitutionally infirm."

Biazon said the ruling "is giving us hope that the institutions and institutional processes are still working."

"We can still rely on the independence of the Supreme Court to resolve constitutional issues," he said in an interview.

Sen. Manuel Villar Jr. made a similar comment: "The enlightened ruling of the Supreme Court proves to everyone that [it is] still independent of Malacañang. The people's trust and confidence in the judiciary will surely be reinforced because of this."

Lacson said the tribunal acted judiciously and with unanimity on the matter. He said each justice should be commended.

'Continuing game'

But Wilson Fortaleza, leader of the militant group Sanlakas, said the ruling was a "pyrrhic victory."

"A win-win formula usually connotes compromises. I don't know if lawmakers are satisfied with this. If so, it must be just part of the continuing political game," he said.

According to Fortaleza, Malacañang knew that EO 464 had no legal basis.

"Sadly, the [high court's] decision came late and the EO has already served its purpose. The challenge now for the Senate is to demand retribution for the injury," he said.

Initially, Bagong Alyansang Makabayan secretary general Renato Reyes Jr. said the tribunal's ruling would once again make legislative inquiries effective in uncovering the truth.

Said Reyes: "The score is now 1-1 for the petitioners. We lost the ID system case but it appears we won in the EO 464 case. The junking of EO 464 means a roadblock to truth-seeking has been removed."

But later, he said: "If the ban on Cabinet officials stays, the decision will have no teeth. It would be less effective."

He said the high court might only be trying to appease the public while still providing a degree of protection to the executive department.

"Our faith in the Supreme Court hangs in the balance because there are cases still to be decided. We lost in the ID system case and are unsure about [how the tribunal would decide on the calibrated preemptive response policy and Proclamation No. 1017, which imposed a week-long state of emergency in February]," Reyes said.

'Don't gloat'

House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles warned senators not to "gloat or abuse their investigative powers."

"I respect the tribunal's decision. The entire Congress welcomes it," he said in a phone interview.

According to Nograles, a lawyer, the ruling "upholds the inherent powers of Congress to check the executive department, and gives Congress every means available to summon witnesses, resource persons, etc."

He said this had been the majority's position on congressional investigations, "so long as this power is not abused by Congress itself and the rights of persons are respected."

Nograles declined to comment on the specifics of the ruling, but said Malacañang could seek a reconsideration or have "some legal slips corrected."

"Meanwhile, I rejoice over the sign of [the tribunal's] independence," he said. He called on senators not to abuse congressional inquiries "but instead act on pending bills" such as the General Appropriations Act and the antiterror bill.

'Win-win' solution

In a joint statement, Representatives Benasing Macarambon (NPC, Lanao del Sur), and Monico Puentevella (Lakas, Bacolod City) welcomed the ruling, expressing hope that this could provide a "win-win" solution to the raging issue.

But Antique Rep. Exequiel Javier expressed the fear that the high court decision would "spell open season once again for the Senate to engage in investigative witch-hunts in aid of partisan politicking."

Macarambon said EO 464 was a reaction to Senate witch-hunts that were compromising the country's national security and its image abroad.

"We call on senators not to abuse their investigative powers for partisan political gain," he said. *With a report from Michael Lim Ubac*

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Erap contradicted self in trial, Chavit claims

ILOCOS SUR GOVERNOR LUIS "CHAVIT" Singson said yesterday that former President Joseph Estrada contradicted himself when he admitted in court this week that a son received a P1.2-million check from Singson as a birthday gift and denied it was meant to buy a P13-million necklace for his mistress Laarni Enriquez.

Singson pointed out in a statement that Estrada had claimed earlier that the check was payment for money owed Enriquez, who is known to be a jeweler.

Singson said Estrada, through his court-appointed lawyer Prospero Crescini, had told the court during the earlier stages of the five-year-old trial that the Ilocos Sur governor had purchased a diamond ring from Enriquez for a certain Rachel Tiongson.

"Court records will bear me out on this," Singson said. "By issuing contradicting versions in his testimony, he is digging ... his own grave."

Singson insisted that, as he had testified in a 2002 hearing, the P1.2-million check was his "contribution" for a P13-million diamond necklace that Estrada's gambling cronies gave to the former movie starlet as a present. The suggestion to pass the hat around, he said, came from businessman Mark Jimenez.

Singson said the check was from his Metrobank account that supposedly contained Estrada's *payola* collections from *jueteng* lords. He said he issued the check against that same account because he felt that the P1.2 million contribution toward a gift for Enriquez was too much.

Then Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo, in the same 2002 hearing, said the check ended up being deposited in Enriquez's account with a Philippine Savings Bank's branch in Murphy, Quezon City.

In his testimony last Wednesday, Estrada said that of the P1.2 million gift from his erstwhile gambling buddy, P1 million went to Jacob, Estrada's son by Enriquez and Singson's godson; and the balance of P200,000 was divided between Jacob's two siblings.

"I was surprised. I didn't know why the amount was that big. Probably he just wanted to ingratiate himself," Estrada said of the check from Singson.

He said it could not have been a gift for Enriquez as her birthday falls on Sept. 22 whereas the check was issued on Dec. 22, 1999.

Estrada said he had never seen that check and found out about it only after Enriquez told him about it. *Nelson F. Flores*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, April 21, 2006
Octave of Easter, Friday

1st Reading:	Acts 4:1-12
Gospel:	Jn 21:1-14

Jesus revealed himself to the disciples by the Lake of Tiberias. He appeared to them in this way. Simon Peter, Thomas who was called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee and two other disciples were together; and Simon Peter said to them, "I'm going fishing." They replied, "We will come with you" and they went out and got into the boat. But they caught nothing that night.

When day had already broken, Jesus was standing on the shore, but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus called them, "Children, have you anything to eat?" They answered, "Nothing." Then he said to them, "Throw the net on the right side of the boat and you will find some." When they had lowered the net, they were not able to pull it in because of the great number of fish.

Then the disciple Jesus loved said to Peter, "It's the Lord!" At these words, "It's the Lord," Simon Peter put on his clothes, for he was stripped for work, and jumped into the water. The other disciples came in the boat dragging the net full of fish; they were not far from land, about a hundred meters.

When they landed, they saw a charcoal fire with fish on it, and some bread. Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you've just caught." So Simon Peter climbed into the boat and pulled the net to shore. It was full of big fish—one hundred and fifty-three—but, in spite of this, the net was not torn.

Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast," and not one of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" for they knew it was the Lord. Jesus then came and took the bread and gave it to them, and he did the same with the fish.

This was the third time that Jesus revealed himself to his disciples after rising from the dead.

Commentary

Peter and John tell the story and imitate Jesus. With power seeping out into the community in them and filled with the Holy Spirit, they tell the truth courageously. They are a far cry from the disheartened disciples, going back to fish and finding nothing all night. Jesus walks the beach, invites them to breakfast, and feeds them. "Come children, eat your meal." Eucharist is resurrection life and baptism experienced again in community, and when we eat together, we are forgiven and summoned beyond ourselves into the Body of Christ. In the bread and fish we are again made disciples, missionaries and bringers of good news to all.

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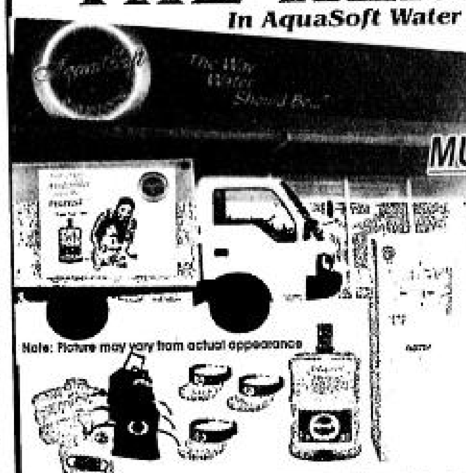

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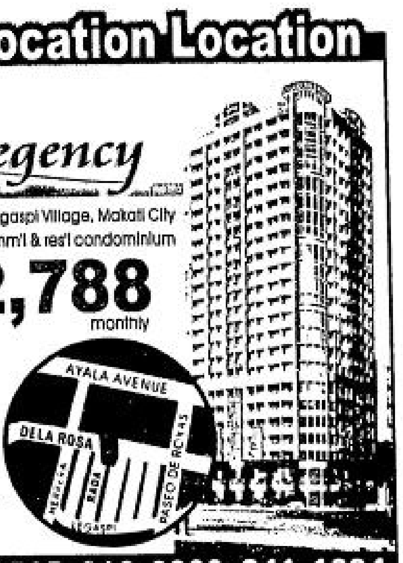

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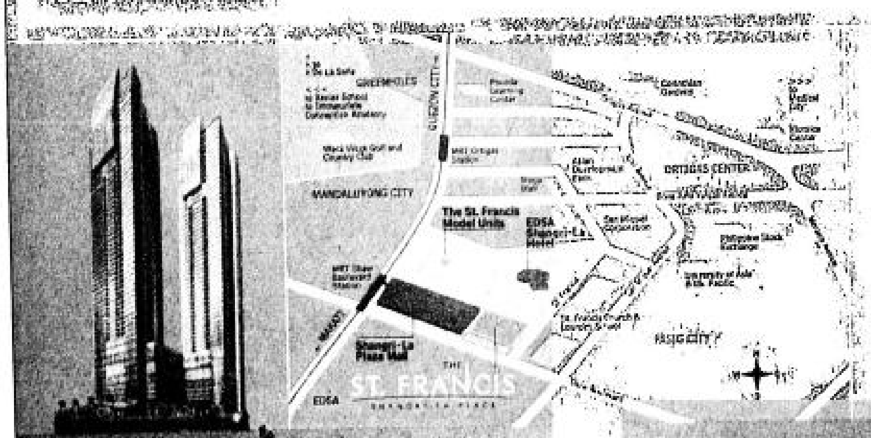

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Gonzalez playing God, say women's advocates

By Philip C. Tubeza

ACCUSING HIM OF "PLAYING GOD" AND abusing his authority, angry women's rights advocates yesterday demanded that Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez resign for downgrading the charges against three of the four US Marines accused of raping a Filipino woman in Subic last year.

Akbayan party-list Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales said Gonzalez had virtually allowed the three Marines—Lance Corporals Keith Silkwood and Dominic Duplantis and S/Sgt. Chad Carpentier—to "go scot free" since as mere accessories, instead of principals, they could post bail.

"He made them accessories and that's bailable. If they post bail and go to the States, then that's it for the Philippines," Rosales said.

"He is apparently drunk with power and playing God. He has failed not only to defend the dignity of the victim but also to assert the sovereignty of the country," she added.

The women's rights party-list group Gabriela said Gonzalez, and not Olongapo City Prosecutor Prudencio Jalandoni, should resign over the latest controversy to hit the celebrated rape case.

"Gonzalez has no moral ground to say Jalandoni is free to resign from the Subic rape case. If there is anybody who should resign, it is him," the group said in a statement.

Jalandoni quit the case on Wednesday after saying he was disappointed by Gonzalez's decision that effectively overturned the results of the preliminary investigation he (Jalandoni) had conducted.

"What (Gonzalez) did was a big mistake. He tied the hands of the prosecution. The (Marines') lawyers will now cite the legal opinion of this great Raul Gonzalez," Rosales said. "He should resign."

Rosales noted that Gonzalez even admitted that he could have exonerated the Marines but decided against it, fearing a public backlash.

"I almost exonerated them but didn't, if only to satisfy the mob," Gonzalez had said on Wednesday.

Retorted Rosales: "Who's he calling a mob? Women? Us Filipinos? He has the mental horizon of a chicken."

Lana Linaban, Gabriela deputy secretary general, said "all indications of a conspiracy to commit an injustice and to absolve the US Marines from the crime" pointed to Gonzalez.

"Ever since the case started, he hasn't been helpful but instead he's been busy defending the accused and insulting women at the same time," Linaban said.

Gabriela also assailed Gonzalez for saying that the three Marines cheering on the principal suspect, Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith, during the alleged rape did not make them co-conspirators in the crime.

"This is a downright insult to the justice system. It's a shame that the head of the Department of Justice does not even understand the anti-rape law and is ignorant in dealing with sensitive cases such as rape," the group said.

Gabriela, on the other hand, lauded Jalandoni for speaking out against Gonzalez's decision to downgrade the charges against the three Americans.

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'FALSE HUMILITY'

Bishop slammed for apology to Erap

By Philip C. Tubeza and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

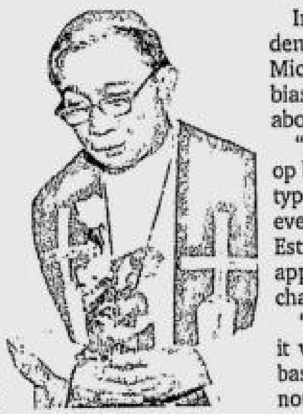
ADMINISTRATION ALLIES IN Congress yesterday called on the Church hierarchy to subject Novaliches Bishop Antonio Tobias to disciplinary action for his "unauthorized" apology to deposed President Joseph Estrada last Wednesday.

Tobias went against the position of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines and was dragging the Church into political controversy when he apologized to Estrada for the Church's role in the 2001 second people power uprising that ousted him, said Davao del Sur Rep. Douglas Cagas and Leyte Rep. Eduardo Veloso of the Nationalist People's Coalition.

It was "a show of arrogance and false humility" as he was "[trying] hard to please Estrada on his 69th birthday," they said in a statement.

Tobias, who delivered the homily at the Mass to mark Estrada's 69th birthday last Wednesday, said he hoped Estrada would "forgive the Church for what happened to you."

It was thought that he was referring to the major role played by the late Jaime Cardinal Sin in the 2001 Edsa uprising that drove Estrada out of power. Tobias also claimed to have been at Edsa 2.



TOBIAS

"The Catholic Church has nothing to apologize for. They listened to the voice of the people and that led to the confluence of events which eventually took Erap out of Malacañang in 2001," Cagas said.

He said Tobias should be reprimanded by the Church leadership for "compromising the position of the entire institution."

His statement was a "slap against the CBCP and the Church," he said.

In Malacañang, Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor said Tobias' action said much about his character.

"I respect him as a bishop but I don't respect that type of character... I think even President Erap Estrada himself does not appreciate that type of character," Defensor said.

"Edsa 2 was not wrong, it was correct and it had basis at the time. There is nothing wrong with fighting against this administration but to regret what you did out of conviction years ago is not right," he said.

Defensor, who is President Macapagal-Arroyo's informal liaison with Estrada, said he was in constant touch with the disgraced leader.

"He [Estrada] likes me even though I have never apologized for my role in Edsa 2," said Defensor who was one of the congressmen who set in motion the impeachment complaint against Estrada in 2000.

He said Estrada had told him that would apologize to him but he never liked this kind of people because they did not have "*paninindigan*" (principles) and "I agree with him totally."

Veloso said Tobias should apologize to the CBCP and the entire Catholic Church for taking it upon himself to apologize to Estrada.

"While democracy rules in the CBCP where every member is free to speak his mind, Bishop Tobias has no right or authority to speak in behalf of the organization much less for the whole church," Veloso said.

"The CBCP is trying to be apolitical and has so far succeeded in dismissing opposition efforts to use the Church against the government. But here comes Bishop Tobias issuing blatantly partisan political statements," he said.

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PEOPLE'S INITIATIVE

Delays in signature checks seen

By Jerome Aning

THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS YESTERday hinted at possible delays in the ongoing verification of signatures for the people's initiative for Charter change being pushed by several groups.

Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. said the office faced several problems most of them related to logistics after meeting with several election officers from cities and towns, the election agency's spokesperson for initiative matters, James Arthur Jimenez, told reporters in a briefing.

Jimenez said he did not want to use the phrase "slow down" in referring to the process of verification and opted to state that the Comelec was "taking its time" in perusing the millions of signatures which Cha-cha proponents claimed to have gathered in support of the initiative.

"We will not treat the verification as a special case that we have to spend time. We will verify the signatures based on our timetable as elections officers who also have their regular schedules to follow," Jimenez said.

He said local Comelec officials would not be pressured into prioritizing or speeding up the verification and would do so at their "ideal time."

"They (the pro-Cha-cha groups) are not the only ones asking for attention. Comelec has other regular functions that might suffer. We will do what we will need to do," Jimenez said.

One of the election officers who attended the meeting with Abalos, lawyer Lourdes Ugalino of Makati City's 1st district, said the problems raised by her colleagues "mostly dealt with logistics."

"The chair cleared many questions; the problems were minimal," Jimenez also explained.

The spokesperson noted that many election officers had been busy in processing applications from people seeking to be registered as voters ahead of next year's midterm elections.

He said Abalos told the local Comelec officials "not to let the verification disrupt their other functions."

He also stressed that there was no need for the Comelec central office to issue guidelines on the procedures for verification. "What's important for us is the transparency of this process and that we do our job correctly," he said.

Ugalino and Makati's 2nd district election officer, Melanie Lagera, whom Jimenez presented to reporters in the briefing, said they each received from the pro-Cha-cha group Akbay Pinoy a box containing sheets with the signatures of those who backed the initiative petition.

Lagera said that since her office was still busy conducting hearings for the applications for registration of voters, she had not yet opened the box, which was the size of a *balikbayan* box, that she received Monday.

Lagera said she wanted the box opened in the presence of representatives of Akbay Pinoy, members of the media and other interested parties, whether in favor of or against Cha-cha.

Ugalino for her part said she had opened the box and begun authenticating signatures and opening their record books.

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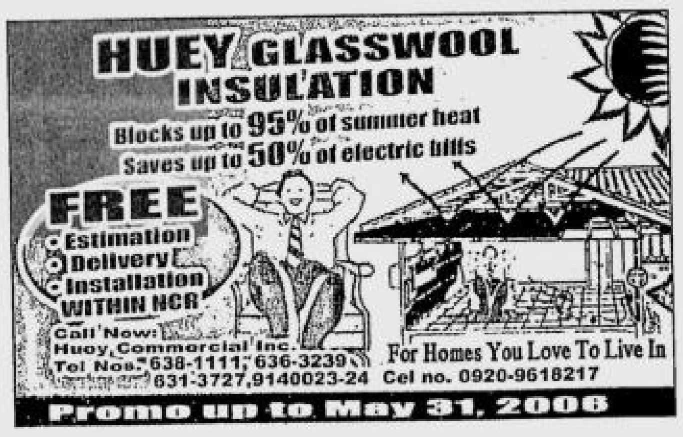

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Namfrel nominates 3 to Comelec

By Jerome Aning

THE POLL WATCHDOG NATIONAL MOVEment for Free Elections yesterday said it had submitted to Malacañang three nominees for the two remaining vacancies in the Commission on Elections.

Nominated were Namfrel legal counsel Jose Bernas; Toby Melissa Monsod, daughter of former Comelec chair Christian Monsod; and former Cultural Center of the Philippines president Baltazar Endriga.

Endriga has been a member of the Namfrel Council since 1998 and served as the private sector representative to the Comelec's Advisory Council for Automation.

Monsod served as Namfrel's regional director in Mindanao and was a lead member of the audit team that conducted the validation of the Namfrel Terminal Report for the previous election.

The three were found to have the "necessary credentials" to serve as Comelec commissioners during a recent meeting of Namfrel's National Council, the group said in a statement.

"More importantly, they are persons who are known for their integrity, the very quality we need in our government's poll body in order to have fair and credible elections," Namfrel said.

Comelec's image has been tarnished by the "Hello, Garci" wiretapping scandal, with one of its commissioners being accused of rigging the results of the 2004 presidential elections. Some of the Comelec officials are also being investigated for graft for entering into an allegedly anomalous P1.3-billion computerization contract.

Namfrel said their nominees "were deliberated upon against the required criteria as stipulated in the Constitution.

Ailing Beltran headed for Heart Center

By Tarra V. Quismundo

RECENTLY ALLOWED TO transfer to a hospital of his choice, detained Rep. Crispin Beltran will have his heart checked at the Philippine Heart Center, his lawyers said in a manifestation submitted to a Makati court.

The lawyers on Wednesday filed a compliance report detailing the party-list legislator's medical treatment with Makati Judge Jenny Lind Aldecoa-Delorino of Branch 137, who had granted the transfer request.

"Since Congressman Beltran is suffering from hypertensive cardiovascular disease, among other things, he opts to be transferred to the PHC [on] East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City. His unstable health condition and risk of another stroke incident warrant that he undergo a cardiovascular work-up," said the report submitted by Beltran's lawyers from the Public Interest Law Center.

Beltran, 73, had been confined for more than a month at the Philippine National Police General Hospital in Camp Crame, Quezon City, following his arrest on Feb. 24 for the non-bailable crime of rebellion.

The Department of Justice filed the case against Beltran and Magdalo member 1st Lt. Lawrence San Juan for their alleged alliance with communist rebels aimed at ousting President Macapagal-Arroyo.

In asking for Beltran's transfer, his lead lawyer Romeo Capulong had said in court that "space is not a problem" at the PNP hospital.

Rather, he said, it was the lack of facilities and specialists who could take care of Beltran.

At the PHC, Beltran would undergo a thorough checkup beginning today, doctors said, to include an electrocardiography, which would check his heartbeat, and a 2D (two-dimensional) echo doppler exam, an ultrasound that would probe the heart for any irregularities in size, muscle function and internal blood flow, among other things.

He would also undergo complete blood, urine, chest and brain tests.

The length of his confinement at the PHC would depend on the test results and his doctors, his lawyers said.

BELTRAN

House bill seeks to widen scope of Sotto law

IN DEFENSE OF PRESS FREEDOM, THE House of Representatives has passed a bill that would protect journalists working in the broadcast industry, news agencies and Internet publications from being forced to divulge the identities of confidential news sources.

In a statement issued by his office, De Venecia, himself a former journalist, pointed out that House Bill 4835 would amend Republic Act No. 53, also known as the Sotto Law, which was enacted in 1946 and extends such protection to the publishers, editors and reporters of print publications only.

The new bill, which was passed before Congress went on recess for Lent and Easter, would extend such protection to broadcast and Internet journalists as well.

"During these times of great challenges facing the nation, public information is a vital ingredient to national unity and to socio-economic and political development. The role of media in nation-building is clearly important," the statement quoted De Venecia, who is abroad, as saying.

He said the bill was intended to fill-up "an omission and correct an anomaly" in the present law, which was "enacted at a time when the Internet was not even a dream and the broadcast media just a vehicle for pure entertainment like music and dramas."

Philip C. Tubeza

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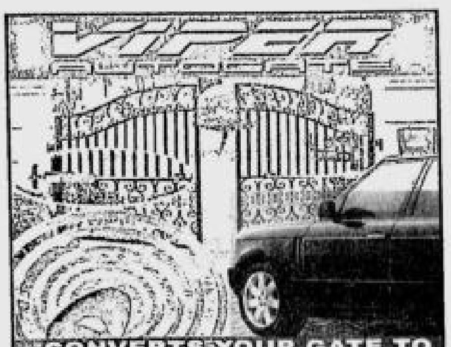

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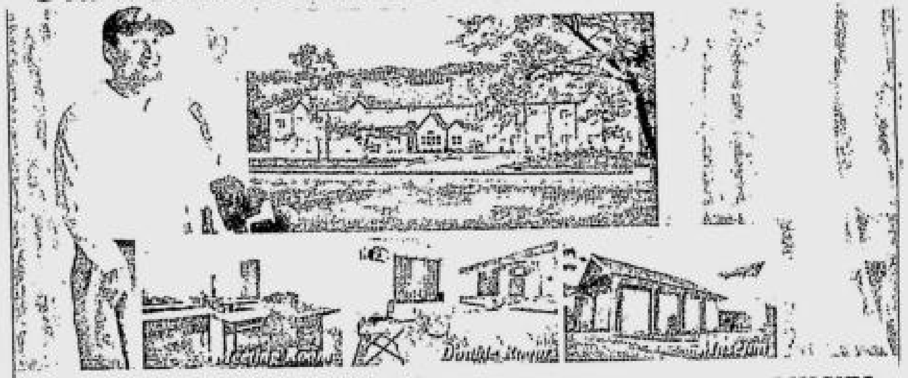

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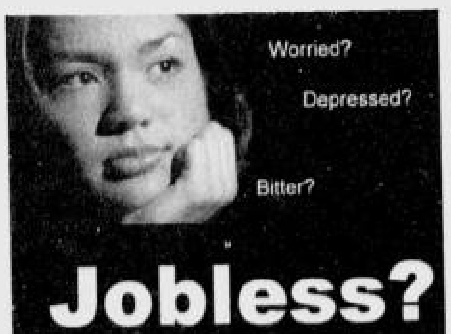

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'Padrinos' blamed for delay in 2 Customs revamps

By Leila B. Salaverria

POLITICIANS WHO WERE the "padrinos and ninongs" (godfathers) of certain Bureau of Customs officials were behind the postponement of two reshuffles at the BOC early this month, Commissioner Napoleon Morales admitted yesterday.

Morales and Finance Secretary Margarito Teves had ordered the reshuffles in March to be implemented in April but these were held in abeyance for unexplained reasons.

In an interview at the Department of Justice, Morales said the BOC was "highly politicized," thus, Teves had suggested the bureau document the performances of the officials concerned in order to justify their transfers to their politician-backers.

"You know, customs is really highly politicized. They have their own backers. So Secretary Teves is saying that we just document [their performances] so that we can give these to their *padrinos* and *ninongs*," said Morales.

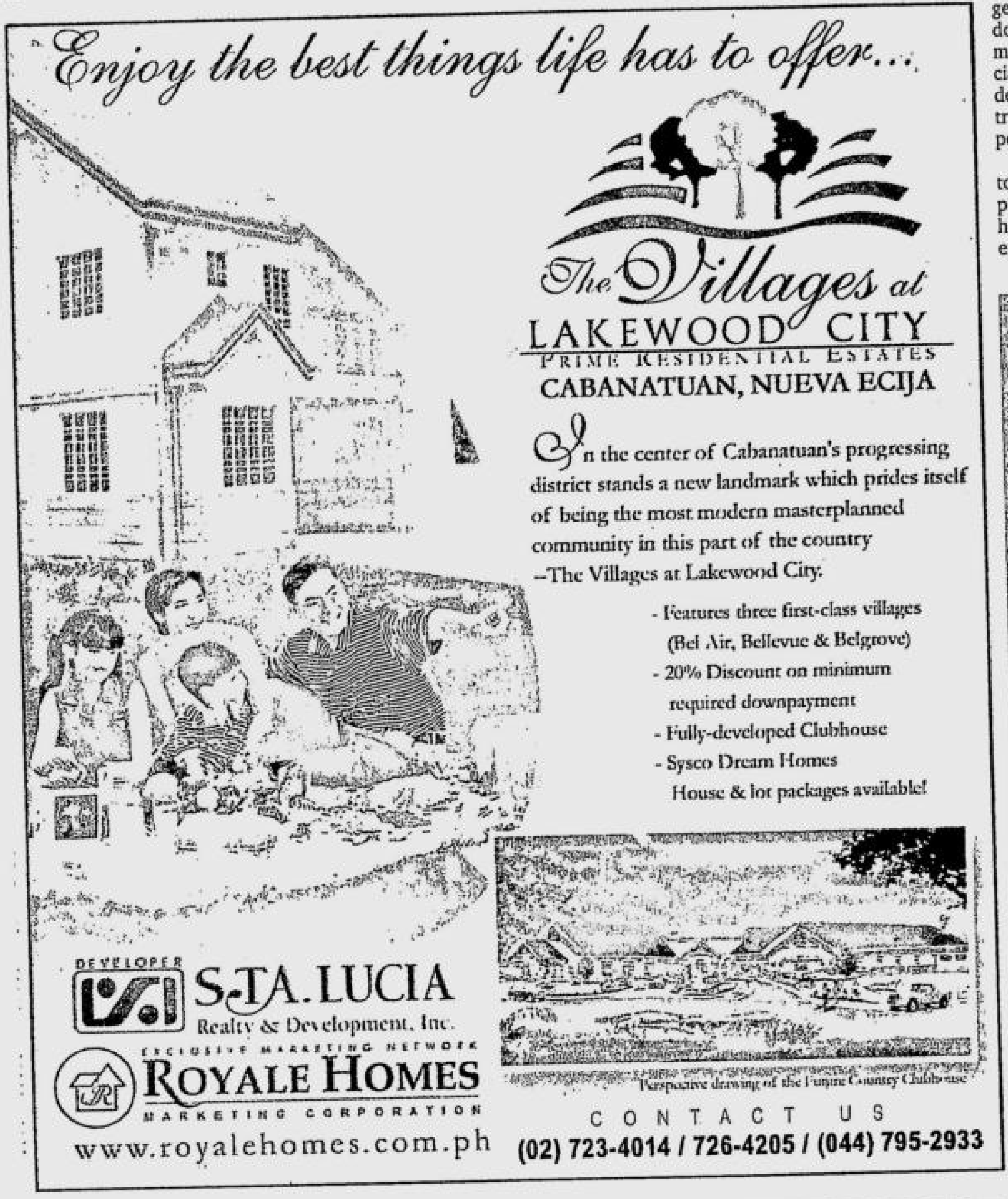
He said the backers included congressmen, and that lobbying on behalf of their protégés could not be avoided at the bureau.

"Well, we can't avoid that in customs. You know, customs is a celebrated agency of the government. So we will give them the black and white. What I'm saying is... the lateral attrition law is now in effect. If you do not perform you have to go," Morales said.

He said the Lateral Attrition Law prescribes penalties for BOC and Bureau of Internal Revenue personnel who do not do their jobs well.

Teves had issued the first reshuffle order affecting five customs officers who were presidential appointees. The second order was issued by Morales and affected 20 officials around the country.

Morales said he was waiting for Teves to return from an overseas trip at the end of the month before deciding what to do about the postponed revamp.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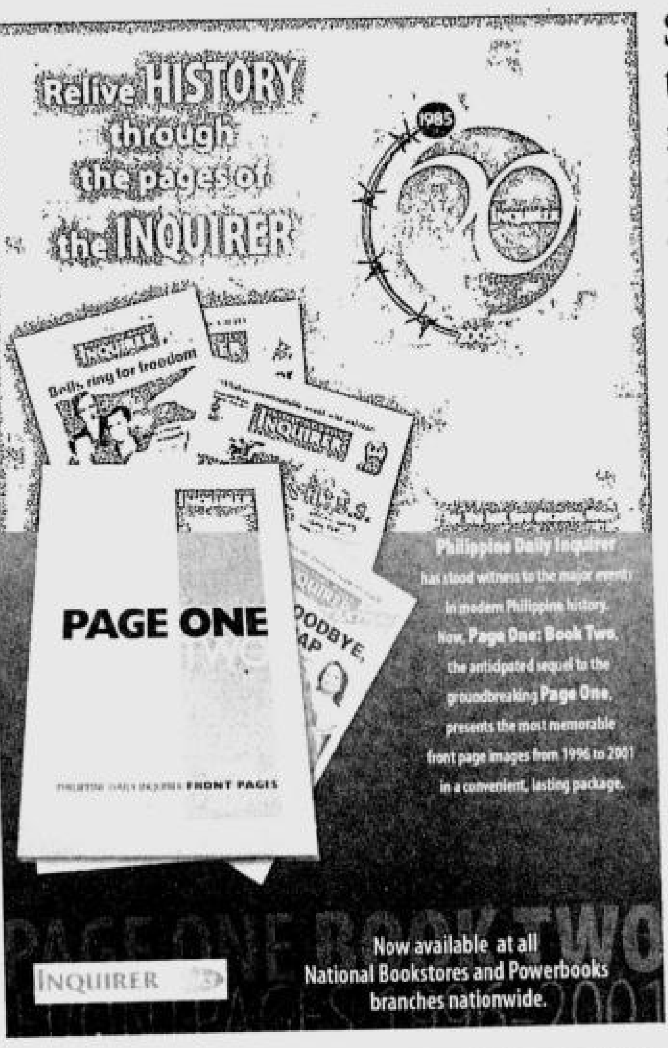
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Sinait Int'l to conduct medical mission

THE SINAITENIANS International will conduct a three-day medical-dental mission in Sinait, Ilocos Sur this month.

Sinaitenians International president Ronnie Salvador said at least 20 doctors, nurses, and dentists belonging to Sinaitenians International have flown in from the US to participate in the project to be held on April 26, 27 and 28. The project is being undertaken with the support of the Philippine Dental Association Ilocos Sur and Zambales chapters.

The group, which is comprised of Sinait town residents who have migrated to the US, had recently raised funds for the expansion of the Sinait District Hospital.

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Chuckie Chocolatey Missions PROMO

GMA is out of town on 'semi-private' time

By Christine O. Avendaño

PRESIDENT MACApagal-Arroyo went out of town yesterday but no one in the Palace is saying where she is exactly.

All her chief of staff, Michael Defensor, could say was that President Arroyo was having a "semi-private" time and that three congressmen were with her.

"I cannot reveal for security reasons," Defensor told reporters when asked of the whereabouts of the President, who had no schedule of any media coverage yesterday.

He said that Ms Arroyo left early in the morning yesterday.

Asked to confirm rumors that she was actually at Tubattaha Reef in Palawan to go diving, Defensor said he did not know.

He also couldn't say what time the President was expected back at the Palace.

But President Arroyo will be definitely back by today, with her media schedule starting at 1 p.m. when she is to host a roundtable discussion at Barangay Manggahan in Pasig City.

At 4 p.m. today, she will be in Indang, Cavite to address the 79th Commencement Exercises of the Cavite State University.

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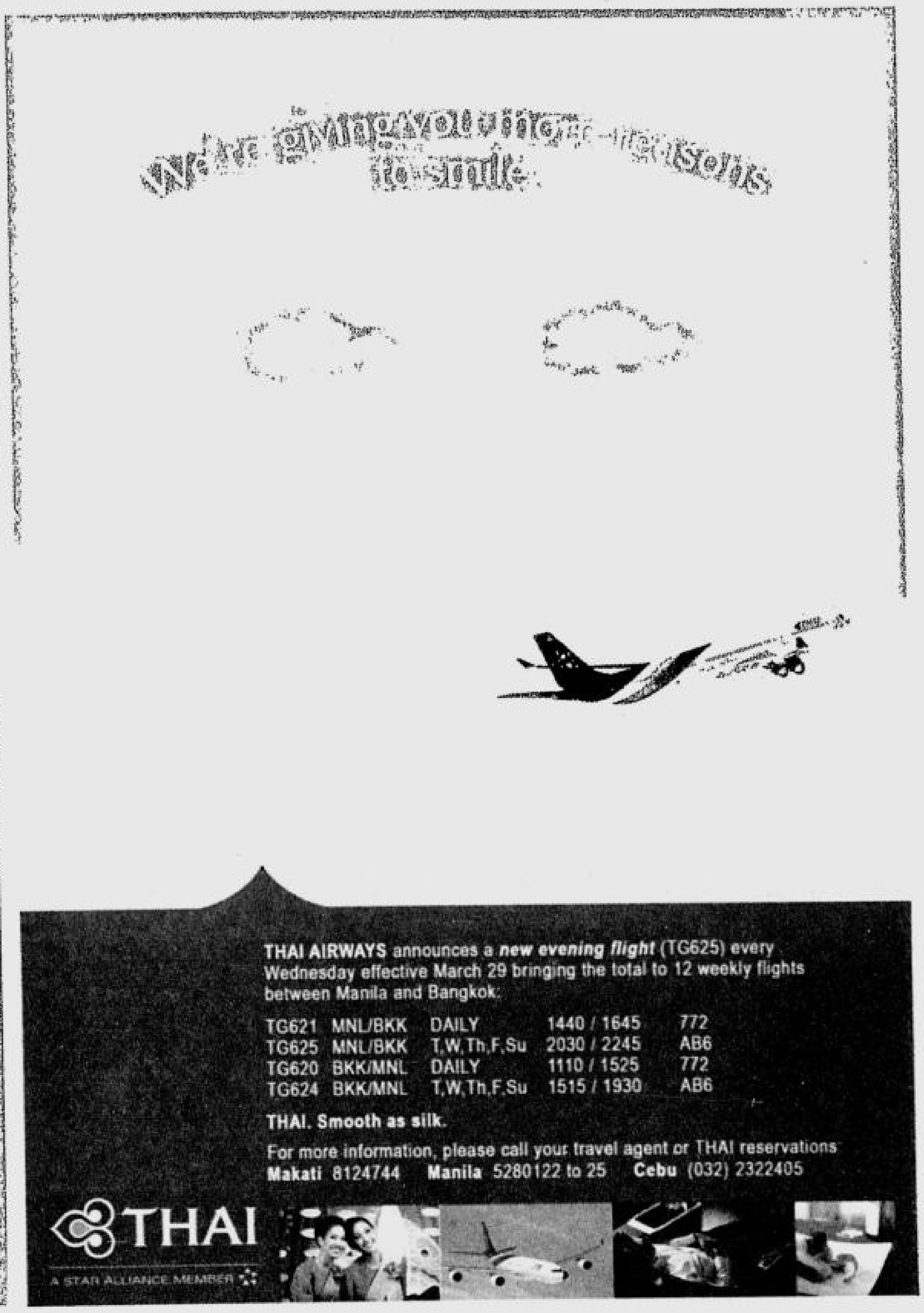
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16) During the draws, potential winners shall be notified by phone call and text message. Before declaring the winner, the respective cellular phone providers shall undertake the verification process of the cellular number of the potential winner. Only potential winners cleared by Chikka Asia, Inc. and the respective cellular phone providers shall be declared the winner.
17) Winners, through their legal guardians, shall be asked to present the notification letter or the text message received, two (2) valid IDs and the 6-pack wrap containing the specific winning code when claiming their prize. The winners, through their legal guardians must present all of the mentioned requirements otherwise he/she cannot claim the prize.
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2) Type CHUCKIE <space> 5-digit unique code and send to 2929 for Touch Mobile, Globe, Talk & Text and Smart subscribers.
3) CHIKKA.com will send a confirmation message and ask participant to text in CHUCKIE <space> REG <space> name <space> age <space> address.
4) More unique codes sent will earn participants more raffle entries that will entitle them to win other special prizes.
5) Promo period is: April 1-June 30, 2006.
6) Grand draw date will be on July 15, 2006.

PRIZES TO BE WON:
1) There will only be ONE (1) grand prize winner for a trip to Islands of Adventure, Universal Studios in the USA. Said trip is good for a family of four. The winning participant has the discretion of choosing who among the family members will be his/her companions.
   Package Includes:
   - Roundtrip air fare to Universal Studios, Economy class
   - 4 days/ 3 nights hotel accommodation
   - Roundtrip airport transfers
   - Shuttle going to chosen destination
   - Pocket Money US$3,000

* Anything exceeding the given budget and/or itinerary specified shall be shouldered by the winner.

2) A total of 10 Playstation Portables (PSPs), 20 Motorola C261 phones and 50 spy gadget kits will be given as consolation prizes.
3) Four (4) Motorola C261 phones will be given to GMA; four (4) in South Luzon; two (2) each in Central and North Luzon; and four (4) each in North Visayas and Mindanao.
4) Five (5) Playstation Portables (PSPs) will be given to GMA and One (1) each will be given to all areas mentioned above.
5) Raffle draw of the Playstation Portables (PSPs), Motorola C261 phones and spy gadget kits will be done every Friday of every 2 weeks during the duration of the promo, starting week of April 28.
6) Winners of consolation prizes are still qualified to win the grand prize.
7) Only the trip to Islands of Adventure Universal Studios grand prize is convertible to cash.

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readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph • Tel. No. 897-8808, Loc. 342

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Loathsome

EDITORIAL

OUTRAGE OVER JUSTICE SECRETARY RAUL GONzalez's downgrading of the charges against three of the four American servicemen accused of raping a Filipina seems to be concentrated more against his words than his actions. This only goes to show how effective Gonzalez is as the pit bull of the administration, in charge of snarling and frothing at the mouth and lunging at the crowd, both to frighten and distract the public. After all, he is not just any loose cannon but an integral part of the legal and political arsenal of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

There exists, in fact, a clear division between official attitudes toward the case. State prosecutors, such as Olongapo City Chief Prosecutor Prudencio Jalandoni, believe they have adequate evidence to successfully prosecute all the accused American servicemen. Gonzalez has decided to the contrary, and while he hasn't totally let the other three American soldiers off the hook, only one will actually go on trial for rape. The charges against the others have been reduced to their being accessories.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye has gone on record to say the Arroyo administration fully supports Gonzalez. That means that the justice secretary's rather loathsome rhetoric aside, what he has done has the full blessings of the person for whom he serves as an alter ego: the President.

One of the lawyers of the rape victim brought up a point which indicates why Gonzalez's actions have been met with disgust. Even if Gonzalez says there isn't enough evidence to prove the other accused American servicemen actually raped the victim, Evalyn Ursua points out that the three kept chanting "Go, Smith!" as their fellow soldier assaulted and raped the Filipina. The lawyer asserts that egging on a rapist in this manner is tantamount to participating in a gang rape. It is an argument important enough, to our mind, to deserve being pursued in court. But because of Gonzalez, it won't be brought up when the case is tried.

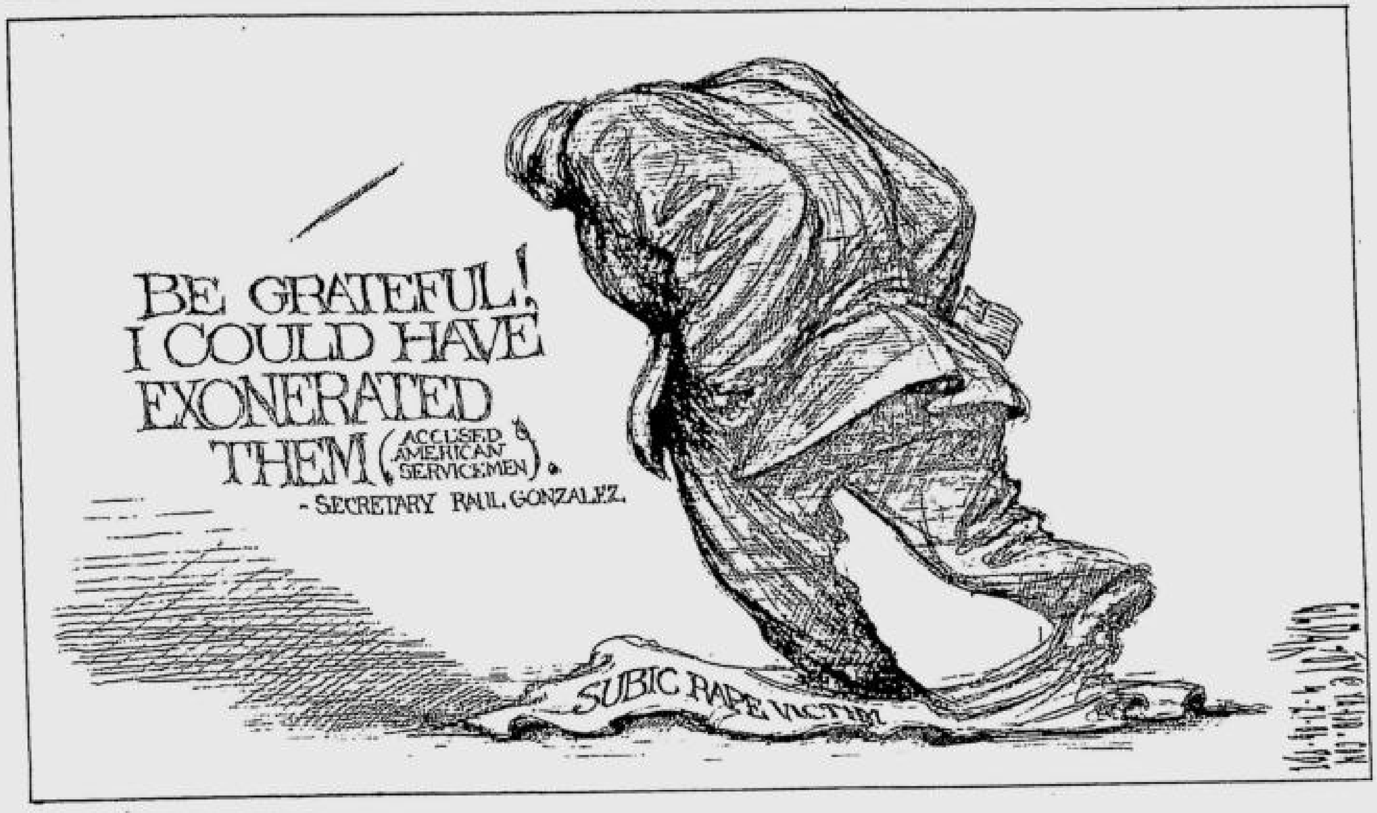
Rape is an act that is less about sex than about power and degrading another person. There are many kinds of rape, and it is necessary in cases not involving actual intercourse to consider psychological intent and the reality that not just the sexual aspect, but the abuse of power and degradation of another deserve investigation and punishment. For these are crimes against persons, too.

In the end, Gonzalez will have the final say as far as this case is concerned. Individuals who don't agree will simply have to protest or, if they are officials, relinquish participation in the case. This is why Jalandoni had no honorable option other than what he's done: to resign from the prosecution team.

It's important to note that none of the four accused servicemen are off the hook. One, as we've said, will go on trial for rape; the other three, as Gonzalez has explained, will have to answer for witnessing the rape and doing nothing to stop it, and then abandoning the victim. There is still hope that all of them will be punished, though not to the extent the victim or her lawyers, including some government lawyers, feel they deserve.

Even as Malacañang notes that only seven months remain for the resolution of the Subic rape case, the nation will have to continue to bear the problem of a useful, but often nasty and alarmingly bigoted official in charge of what should be the clear, dispassionate, but unstoppable dispensation of justice. These things require judgment. And if the judgment calls of an official are immediately put into question because of the zeal and relish he displays in hitting back at critics, what does that say about his ability to inspire confidence?

Again, we return to our original point: For every comment Raul Gonzalez has made that offends, it is well to remember that the man, his thinking and the fruits of his thinking have the full and unequivocal support of the President and the rest of the Cabinet. And that's the most offensive thing of all—as well as the greatest injustice, not only to the executive branch of government but to the country.


BE GRATEFUL! I COULD HAVE EXONERATED THEM (ACCUSED AMERICAN SERVICEMEN).
- SECRETARY RAUL GONZALEZ.
SUBIC RAPE VICTIM

What were GMA's legal advisers doing?

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

HOW LUCKY *NAMAN* THE FOUR AMERICAN soldiers accused of raping a Filipina in Subic: they have no less than Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez as de facto defense counsel. Gonzalez has been defending the GIs more vigorously than have all the listed defense lawyers. In fact, he has been acting like a prosecutor and judge rolled into one. He has already downgraded the charges against three of the GIs from conspirators to mere accessories in the act of rape even though, according to testimonies not denied by the defense, they were egging on and cheering one of them while he humped the helpless victim.

Usually, prosecutors file the more serious charge, but if evidence proves a less serious crime, the judge convicts and sentences the accused for the lesser crime. But if the charge filed is already light, the judge cannot convict him for a graver crime even if evidence points to that. In this rape case, the justice secretary no less has already downgraded the charges against three of the accused, thus assuring that they would be spared the execution chamber or life in prison in case they are convicted, prompting a frustrated prosecutor in Olongapo to resign. Why is Gonzalez doing this when he is the head of the government's prosecution arm? "Maybe," said the parent of a rape victim, "he has a pending petition for an immigration visa to the US, just in case the Arroyo administration falls."

* * *

The justice secretary is the legal adviser of the President, aside from the official chief presidential legal adviser and the host of *abogados de campanilla* and bar flunkers at her beck and call. Why did they not tell her that she cannot legally do what she just did, which was to commute all the death sentences in a wholesale manner?

In commutation of sentences, the case of each prisoner is carefully reviewed and if clemency is justified, the reasons are explained in the commutation message. A blanket commutation of all death sentences with no explanation at all on each case has never been done before.

Besides, before a prisoner's death sentence can be commuted, he must first be convicted with finality by the Supreme Court. But the cases of fully three-fourths of the more than 1,000 prisoners given executive clemency are still being reviewed by the high court, and therefore they are not yet eligible for commutation of sentence. What GMA just did was not mere commutation but legislation. She arrogated unto herself the legislative powers of Congress. At least, Marcos first abolished Congress before he assumed legislative powers, but Congress is still very much alive and kicking at present—although GMA and the House of Representatives would very much prefer the Senate would disappear.

What she should have done first was to certify a bill to Congress to repeal the death penalty law. But she is doing that only now, after she had already committed her booboo. What were all her legal advisers doing before she made the error? Did she consult any one of them? Did Little Mike or Bunye or any of her numerous *super-sipsips* suggest it as a PR gimmick? Or did she decide on it all on her own? Did God appear to her during the retreat in Baguio and tell her to spare all the death convicts so that the government can save money on the drugs to be used for lethal injections?

"I think she did it to save her own skin," commented an opposition critic. "With all her sins against the nation, she knows that she would be prosecuted once she is no longer in power (as they are doing now to former President Esrada), and considering the gravity of many of her crimes, she is likely to be sentenced to lethal injection. With the abolition of the death penalty, she would be spared the fate of Marie Antoinette."

Let me repeat that it was an oppositionist who said that, so you should take it with a grain of salt.

* * *

Existing laws are very clear: Squatters occupying the right-of-way of government infrastructure projects, like railways, highways and streets, buildings and the banks of rivers and creeks, can be ejected summarily and are not entitled to relocation or financial help from the government. So it is amazing why lawyers still keep filing cases in behalf of squatters on the right-of-way of government infrastructure projects petitioning courts to stop the projects so the squatters don't have to be ejected.

The latest to do that is Herminio Harry Roque Jr. on behalf of a group of squatters and squatter organizations who petitioned the Makati Regional Trial Court to nullify the NorthRail project contract, citing the lack of public bidding and claiming the project is "injurious to the squatters illegally occupying hectares of public land along the railway tracks."

Roque filed last year the same charges with the Supreme Court, which eventually dismissed the case (Roque et al. vs. Ermita et al., GR No, 169773). He also headed the investigation by the University of the Philippines Law Center, commissioned by Senate President Franklin Drilon. The Center erroneously identified CNMEC as the prime contractor, instead of CNMEG or the China National Machinery and Equipment Corp. (Group). CNMEC stands for China National Machinery and Equipment Import-Export Corp., one of the 70 subsidiaries of CNMEG, China's sixth largest corporation and one of the world's top construction companies. The Philippine government was originally accused of dealing with a pretender company that lacked the capability to undertake a multibillion-peso railways system, prompting the Chinese government to issue a statement setting the record straight and denying the allegations. *(To be continued)*

English is cool, Pinoy English is 'kulang'

Passion for Reason

Raul C. Pangalangan

THE LATEST SOCIAL WEATHER STATIONS survey shows that Filipinos' self-assessed proficiency in English has declined. The March 2006 survey shows a decline in all aspects of English proficiency, compared to earlier SWS surveys done in 1993 and 2000. The latest nationwide survey was commissioned by the Promoting English Proficiency Project, a joint initiative by the American Chamber of Commerce in Manila and the Makati Business Club, and was also supported by several foreign chambers of commerce involved in an English-is-Cool campaign.

Before I pontificate on speaking the universal language of the 21st century, allow me a little confession. When my parents enrolled me in first grade in Lourdes School of Mandaluyong, I struggled with the entrance test because, all things considered, I didn't speak a word of English. I grew up in a pure Tagalog-speaking home, and during the exam, when the teachers asked me basic yes-or-no questions, I had to keep telling my 6-year-old brain that "yes" meant "oo" and "no" meant "*hindi*." Mercifully, the school principal, Mr. Patricio Soliman, took pity on the hapless Tagalog-speaking kid, and I spent my next 10 happy and well-rewarded years on the sprawling campus on what was then a still bucolic Shaw Boulevard.

Many years later, when I was at Harvard Law School and I won coveted writing prizes, someone asked casually where I learned to write in English, expecting perhaps that I would answer, "In Massachusetts." I proudly told him, "In Mandaluyong." (The urban legend has the legendary Manila Mayor Arsenio Lacson being similarly queried as he was getting off his ship, and shooting back, "In the boat!")

In the SWS survey, I was most interested in the findings on "personal use" of English, which I took to mean those who spoke English often in their daily lives, without being compelled by a teacher or a boss. Given a range of options, 5 percent said they made "full use" of English, 35 percent "fair use," 27 percent "partial use," 19 percent "no use" and 14 percent "no competence" in any way in English. The results also show that personal usage was higher in Metro Manila and in the Visayas than in other areas, in the cities more than the provinces, among the wealthier rather than poorer and, a pleasant surprise, more among the youth than their elders. The combined "full use-fair use" group thus brings to 40 percent the Filipinos who speak English on their own, lower than the 47 percent that registered in the September 2000 survey—disappointing though not disheartening.

Other Asian countries send their youth to the Philippines to learn English. English-wise, we are way ahead of our Asian neighbors, but they are swiftly catching up. When I have foreign guests, they ask how they can give instructions to their Manila cab driver, and I say nonchalantly that they can speak in English to any cab driver and they will manage. Try doing that in Jakarta or Kuala Lumpur.

As Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov famously asked: What Is To Be Done? The most basic is to improve the English competency of the teachers themselves.

For my generation, all subjects were taught in English, and Filipino was used only in one subject called "Filipino" and the subject called "Language" was actually taught in English! We have since reformed. Today, we acknowledge that teaching the basic subjects to primary school children in a foreign language makes no sense. The child has enough problems with math, and then we compound his problems by teaching it in a language he doesn't understand. The young ones today learn many of their subjects in Filipino, and that is only wise.

The old approach bordered on some sort of "immersion," but it only resulted in all the subjects being taught in equally poor English. Since the goal is, for instance, to make math understandable, whatever that takes—and it is then left to the English teacher to undo the damage.

What I insist on is that the few times that English is taught, it must be taught well. Indeed, that is the reason Asian parents send their children to Manila; their teaching methods are so exam-oriented, so traditionally Asian, that they produce students who score 100 percent in vocabulary and grammar exams but can't order a Super Champ with fries at Jollibee.

The threshold problem of a back-to-English program is Taglish. It feels so natural and easy, a practical Filipino solution when one fumbles around for words and intuitively strings together the best words to convey the exact thought from one mind to another. But, we must realize, that is true only if we will be talking just to one another all our lives, and in this globalized world, that will not happen.

What shouldn't be done is for schools to create a language police and penalize those who say "*Aray*" instead of "Ouch." I realize that this resembles the usual "language tables" used in schools abroad. But given our history with the English language, the "English-only zones" might seem too contrived and will turn away otherwise enthusiastic or sympathetic students.

Finally, I have elsewhere argued that the real bane of language teaching in our country is our colonial attitude toward foreign tongues, and our tendency to be embarrassed and to feel inferior that we do not speak it like their natives. Hey, it's just a way of talking and writing. Our inner selves, our dignity, are not diminished by not sounding or writing like them. But it is certainly imperative that we learn their tongue because we want to open the door to a new universe and, in the case of English, we desperately need it to compete for jobs and investments in increasingly competitive markets.

* * *

Comments to passionforreason@gmail.com

Public opinion kinder to Estrada

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE CELEBRATION OF FORMER PRESIDENT Joseph Estrada's 69th birthday on Tuesday was more of a political and judicial landmark than a precious personal event for him and his still considerable body of sympathizers. It revealed, among other things, the durability of his charisma, how much distance has been covered in the judicial system by his trial on plunder charges since they were filed with the Sandiganbayan on April 25, 2001, the shifts in public opinion of him, and the change in the configuration of political forces that played roles in the collapse of his administration in January 2001. All this shows how much flux the Philippine political climate has undergone since he was deposed on Jan. 21, 2001.

To begin with, the birthday was celebrated at St. Peter's Parish Church near the Sandiganbayan. It was the first time he celebrated his birthday outside his detention area since his arrest on April 25, 2001. The previous celebrations were held at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center and at his comfortable rest house in Tanay, Rizal.

The reception table was loaded with food worthy of a feast. The parish was transformed into a fiesta mood for a patron saint, with fireworks, brass band, balloons and *ati-atihan* dancers. Ten priests concelebrated the Mass, a privilege the Church extended, even though it is scrounging for priests to say Mass in thousands of parishes all over the country. To top it all, VIPs from the political sector, including his allies as well as his former tormentors, celebrated with Estrada.

But it would be a mistake to suggest that these manifestations point to the start of Estrada's political rehabilitation. Far from it, his chances of rehabilitation and making a political comeback are as slim as the rehabilitation of Judas after the discovery of "The Gospel of Judas." It cannot be said that all have been forgotten and forgiven. If we want to read the true nature of Philippine political culture correctly, the worst way to do it is through its superficial manifestations. This is what makes Philippine politics perplexing to foreigners and even to scholars.

The judicial process in his plunder case is still under way. On his birthday, Estrada had to attend trial at the nearby Sandiganbayan. Estrada and his lawyers arrived at the courtroom an hour late for the 9:30 a.m. hearing. The justices did not make an issue of the tardiness and accepted his apologies.

The case has dragged on for five years. It was only last month when Estrada started testifying in his defense. And that was a significant turn of events.

Prior to that date, most of the previous five months were used up by delays or postponements. At the very least, it's fair to say that Estrada's side is now being heard. And that the case is moving toward closure, which is important to the credibility of the judicial system in deciding cases without fear or favor.

The change of the climate was underlined by the complexion of VIPs who celebrated with Estrada. They represented a broad political spectrum, ranging from former Sen. Loren Legarda, political allies like Representatives Imee Marcos and Ronaldo Zamora, show-biz personalities, including Susan Roces, widow of defeated presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr., Estrada's film-land buddy, and his nemesis, former Sen. Teofisto Guingona.

The presence of Estrada loyalists was understandable. But Guingona's presence was what made the celebration remarkable. It was Guingona's "I Accuse" privilege speech in the Senate that set the stage for Estrada's impeachment when the disclosure by Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson that Estrada had allegedly received *jueteng* payoffs was beginning to lose its novelty. Now Guingona would like us to believe that he had done his job as a senator, but that what followed was so much water under the bridge. "We just became principled adversaries," he said.

But this only goes to show that fortunes in Philippine politics and alignments are so fluid that former enemies suddenly find themselves breaking bread. When politicians like Guingona talk about "principles," it's best not to believe them. What we should examine more closely is whether institutional processes are being followed and moving toward closure. And this is what is happening in Estrada's plunder case.

It was not beyond Estrada to consider that the political crisis that shook the Arroyo administration would result in the overthrow of her regime and bring in a government with which he could negotiate. But the case has already gone beyond the stage where its outcome can be negotiated.

Public opinion on Estrada has changed over the past five years. It's kinder to him now and tends to forget the worst things the people had thought about him five years earlier. Ironically, President Macapagal-Arroyo, who benefited from the public's hatred for Estrada, is now more unpopular than Estrada was at his lowest popularity rating.

A public opinion survey conducted last March showed that, on the question of the most acceptable person to lead the country, 17 percent of the respondents chose Estrada, and only 11 percent picked President Arroyo. Estrada followed Vice President Noli de Castro, who got 23 percent. This rating encouraged Estrada loyalists to claim that the plunder trial had not closed the possibility of his making a political comeback.

Estrada's prospects for judicial exoneration and political rehabilitation do not lie in volatile and fickle public opinion. They are better served by putting closure to the plunder case, which now appears to be within his grasp.

No turning back

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IF I WERE ERAP, I WOULDN'T KNOW WHETHER to embrace or slug Bishop Antonio Tobias after that homily the bishop delivered Wednesday during the Mass held in observance of the former President's birth anniversary.

There were no reports of what former President Estrada did at the close of the Mass, so my guess is that Erap, who is at least acknowledged as being unfailingly gracious and polite, if not exactly a paragon of civility and good behavior, held in his feelings and bid the bishop a polite farewell.

I'm not even an adherent of the ousted leader, but just listening to video excerpts of the bishop's remarks, I felt myself squirming in my seat, out of discomfort for both Erap's sake and the bishop's.

How would you like to be told on your birthday that you are and have been a sinner who broke several of the Ten Commandments and that you should no longer harbor dreams or fantasies of returning to power?

Then again, Erap might have felt like he had received the biggest birthday present yet when the bishop apologized on behalf of the Catholic Church "for what happened to you" in 2001, even if he added that he and other Church leaders would probably do it again if the situation warranted.

Bishop Tobias giveth, and Bishop Tobias taketh away—though I don't know in what order his apology and scolding were worded. But I do know one thing: the biggest loser at that birthday Mass was not Erap but the good bishop, who managed to paint himself as both uncouth and unctuous in one fell swoop.

The reminder about Erap's sins may have been called for, and some quarters (but not this columnist) may have thought the apology was necessary, but both statements could have been better phrased or more politely worded.

* * *

STILL, the issue is not merely one of semantics, or civil behavior and speech.

For one thing, Bishop Tobias may have been in the right when he rebuked the former president about his failings, but to do so on so public an occasion, and one that had been planned to at least give comfort to an individual and his followers, smacks of grandstanding on the prelate's part.

If indeed the bishop had wanted to do his part as a spiritual adviser, then perhaps he could have done the sermonizing in private, in the confessional—provided, of course, that Erap would have sought his counsel and forgiveness.

Then, too, what right did Bishop Tobias have to ask Estrada's "forgiveness" for what the "Church" did in 2001? For one thing, the "Church" is made up of not just the bishops and priests but the faithful as well. Was he saying that he was also speaking on behalf of the thousands of the faithful gathered on Edsa on those fateful days? Did he survey the crowd and ask them if they felt sorry for what they did?

Since Jaime Cardinal Sin, the Church leader who played the most prominent part in giving comfort and counsel to the crowds at Edsa Dos, has passed away, is Bishop Tobias saying the late cardinal was wrong? That seems insulting and arrogant at best, especially since the cardinal is no longer around to defend himself. And has Bishop Tobias taken the mantel of Church leadership here so that he now feels free to issue blanket regrets over Erap's ouster?

What was the point? And why couldn't the bishop simply speak for himself without dragging the rest of us at Edsa along with him?

* * *

BISHOP Tobias' double-bladed homily illustrates precisely what troubles so many otherwise decent folks who're now choosing to stay on the sidelines in the protracted political struggle over President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Erap's family and core supporters certainly want to create a scenario where the early departure of GMA from Malacañang means a triumphant return for the deposed president. And the longer GMA insists on staying on despite allegations about her stealing the election, and the harder she works to railroad an even longer tenure for herself, the more likely this scenario seems.

Observers have already noted how politicians and civic leaders who were once at the forefront of the "oust-Erap" movement now have no qualms about sharing the same protest stage with known supporters and even family members of the former president. So is it simply a case of "the enemy of my enemy is my friend"?

* * *

NOW that Bishop Tobias has so baldly laid out the polarized options of the post-Edsa Dos protesters, perhaps it's time the anti-GMA movement, especially those who had taken such moralistic stances regarding the failings of the Erap administration then, made clear where they stand now. Perhaps they should address the discomfort and unease of many and cut and cut cleanly any ties with Erap and the Erap forces, no matter how convenient it may be for now and how the Erap machinery can muster the needed crowds.

They need to send the message that to be anti-GMA today is not to be pro-Erap, because, to quote Bishop Tobias, Estrada has had his time in power and he failed miserably.

People also need to see that being anti-GMA today is to be for something: for imperatives like truth and justice, good government and the Constitution.

Anti-GMA leaders need to show that there is a way forward, that despite the present lack of seemingly viable names and faces, we can create a new and different future if only we keep faith in our country. Certainly, there is no turning back, despite the fervent hopes of Erap and his coterie. The strongest message to be sent to both Ms Arroyo and Estrada is that their time has passed, and that the nation deserves to move on, with new leadership and a new mandate from the Filipino people.

Hunger and fear

COMMENTARY

Denis Murphy

TWO RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AMONG THE poor of Metro Manila should worry us: their growing hunger and their growing fear of government. Neither has any place in a democracy. Hunger and fear prevent any effective participation of the poor in political life, which participation, research shows, is critical in the country. Without the participation of the poor, there is no way to control the excesses for the powerful. Changing presidents doesn't alter the country's basic power structure, so that little, if anything, changes. Full participation of the poor will bring change.

Surveys show that hunger is increasing among the poor, but what does this mean in reality? It means, first of all, that more than 50 percent of poor families now eat only twice a day—at noon and in the late afternoon, poor people tell us. For a meal, a family of five or six may have a kilo of rice (P21), 10 *tuyo* or fish equivalent (P10) and *gulay* (P10). The exact mix of food items may vary—people may eat noodles instead of rice—but the total cost is nearly always P100 a day, for that is the food budget of the average poor family. Family monthly income among the poor averages between P6,000 and P7,000. Half their money goes for food. The family's P100 daily budget means P20 or less a day for each member. Prisoners are allotted P35 a day in the country's national prisons.

People who have this meager diet day in and day out say they are always hungry. The situation is far worse for the 17 to 20 percent of poor families who earn P3,500 or less a month. What can anyone eat with P10 per person per day? The fertilizer scandal takes on a new meaning when we see how little food is available for the poor.

Further, while the increase in the cost of living for the whole population is about 7 percent per year, it is much higher for the poor, according to Karin Schelzig Bloom of the Asian Development Bank. She told this writer this phenomenon has been well known since 1958. The poor need their own cost-of-living analysis, she says. An informal study showed food prices of the poor rose by 21 percent in 2005. The survey covered the prices of sugar, sardines, noodles and eggs.

The second ominous development is a gathering cloud of fear which stunts efforts to bring the poor into the democratic process. Many among the poor are afraid now to attend meetings—and not only those that deal directly with political change, but even those called to discuss happenings in their immediate lives. Recently for example, a barangay captain in Pandacan warned the people living on the railroad tracks not to meet to discuss their coming eviction. He said it was prohibited by Proclamation 1017, and if they met, he would arrest them. The man later caused the arrest of Kadamay people who tried to hold such a meeting.

People living on the University of the Philippines campus were invited to attend a meeting that would discuss Charter change. They said they wouldn't come because barangay officials had warned them not to or else they would be punished. People living on the railroad tracks in Manila were afraid to celebrate the Kalbaryo this year in their barangays because the Kalbaryo judges government actions in the light of the Passion, and they were afraid their barangay leaders would object. The basic teaching of the Kalbaryo is that society treats the poor today as the Romans treated Jesus: in harming the poor, we harm Jesus who has identified Himself with the poor.

Much of the people's fear is caused by barangay officials. These officials are in a unique position to frighten poor people because they know what they do and their individual needs and they can punish in more personal and effective ways than higher officials. A mayor, for example, wouldn't even know the people on the tracks were meeting. Barangay officials in Makati played a key role in evicting 2,800 families from the railroad tracks, their own people, over the past two months by frightening and threatening them. When the families were gone, the officials celebrated with the incentives given them by superiors. Arguments in favor of organizing, democracy and free choice have little weight in the face of threats made by these officials.

We shouldn't be surprised that the urban barangay is so easily employed by higher ups to control people. Weren't they established by President Ferdinand Marcos for that very purpose in the early days of martial law? "Truly I was born a sinner; in sin my mother conceived me," the Psalmist says. He could have been speaking of the urban barangay.

As it is hard to imagine living on the diet of the poor, it is hard for middle-class people to imagine the atmosphere of fear that overhangs poor people, especially those who aspire to live as free citizens. Top officials may not be fully responsible for all the excesses of barangay officials and others, but they have unleashed the tiger and it goes its own destructive way.

People working with the ADB say that China's elite may be dictatorial, but they make serious concessions to the poor because they fear social unrest. They lament that this is not so in democratic Philippines where there are no limitations on the elite who can ignore the poor without repercussions. They know how to manipulate the poor at election time. At other times, they intimidate them.

Hunger and fear lie at the base of urban poor inaction. Hunger and fear have no place in a nation that celebrates Jesus' Resurrection.

Denis Murphy works with the Urban Poor Associates.

'Pasintabi'

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

IN MOST LANGUAGES IN THE PHILIPPINES, WE SAY "*tabi*" or "*tabi tabi*," with a few variations such as the Ilokano "*bari bari*." The message is the same: "Please step aside." It's a way of excusing ourselves as we intrude into someone's territory.

What's so intriguing is that we are addressing the "unseen" here, supposedly spirits inhabiting the place. We can't really tell where the spirits are and so to be safe, we excuse ourselves just to be sure we don't anger the inhabitants disturbed by our intrusion.

Filipino males are especially vulnerable, with their penchant for seeking instant bladder relief anywhere. Failure to excuse oneself might lead to the unseen getting drenched, followed by vengeance in the form of the shower-giver getting sores and wounds that don't heal or, worse, a swelling of the offending anatomical part.

In Jesus' name

The practice is called "*pasintabi*" in Tagalog, sometimes translated as an "apology." But it is really more of an "Excuse me, please." It's a way of acknowledging that certain places are sacred, requiring some respect. Places that elicit this feeling of sacredness tend to be the more pristine, such as thick forests, a river that still runs vigorously—in other words, any place that inspires awe.

The practice is slowly disappearing. One contributing factor is life in the urban jungle, where nothing's sacred anymore, although I do know quite a few males who still excuse themselves out of habit even as they use one of Bayani Fernando's pink urinals. "You never know," says one friend, while I fret not so much about the unseen spirits than about the electrical post possibly having stray live wires.

The disappearance of *pasintabi* reflects the way our mindsets have shifted. We no longer fear nature, feeling we've conquered her. I thought about this angle when two of my Protestant students recently shared views about a shift in this cultural practice. Evangelical pastors have encouraged a new practice: as one goes through an unfamiliar area, he should not say "*tabi po*" but should instead utter, "*In Jesus' name*." The evangelicals' assumption here is that there are indeed spirits, and that they are malevolent, therefore one invokes Jesus' name to tell them to step aside.

I'm ambivalent about this new practice. On one hand, it tends to reflect the way we look at our position, as humans, as being one of dominating and conquering nature, maybe even invoking the name of Jesus as we do this. But I did get another take on this practice when I shared this bit of information during a speech at a recent conference on Population, Health and the Environment. After my talk, one of the Protestant pastors in the audience came up to me and gave me another interpretation: invoking Jesus' name is intended to be a way of dealing with one's fears.

Fear

Fair enough. But that observation did remind me again of our own collective mixed feelings about nature. I've written in the past about the way we want to think we've come to dominate nature, and yet deep down, especially when natural disasters strike, we are really terrified by nature. Unfortunately, that fear of nature is misplaced. Instead of excusing ourselves as we intrude into nature, we now try to obliterate nature.

The disappearance of *pasintabi* accompanies our growing denial about the many ways we contribute to the destruction of the environment. At the Population, Health and Environment conference, I focused on the blinders we have about the link between population growth and natural disasters. Let's look quickly at the recent tragedy in Barangay Guinsaugon in Southern Leyte. There were 1,600 people living in 40 hectares of land. I did some quick conversions and realized that meant a population density of 4,000 per square kilometer. That's way above the already crowded national average, which is 255 per square kilometer, and certainly, for an upland area, that kind of density is suicidal.

I am not blaming the people of Guinsaugon. We should be examining our conscience, as a nation, in continuing to insist that there is no population problem, that it's all right to continue to take over whatever land there is and to marginalize the poor and powerless, driving them to live in harm's way. Guinsaugon reminds us that we need to be looking at other similar areas courting disaster (the summer season makes me think of Baguio's hillside shanty colonies).

The practice of *pasintabi* reminds us that there is room for co-existence, co-evolution. We can use nature's resources, so long as we are respectful, mindful of the need to use these resources wisely, recycling and replacing whenever we can. I can even envision a new take on the use of "In Jesus' name." Rather than seeing nature as being populated by evil spirits, we need to see nature as a generous host offering us her home, with complete freedom. We may feel uncomfortable and fearful at times, visiting her huge mansion, and so maybe for some people, "In Jesus' name" might be appropriate. But wouldn't it be ridiculous now to invoke Jesus' name against the host who has offered us her home?

Eventually, we might be able to achieve a more sensible balance in the way we look at nature: less fear, more respect. Nature and her "spirits" have almost always been the ones to step aside; maybe sometimes, we too should reciprocate this graciousness.

Nature watch

Today's Earth Day, so here's a little present, a nature watch, which I hope to do regularly, with some help from readers.

I was surprised at how many of my friends commented favorably on my last column, "Quiet time," especially how it alerted them to the splendor of the trees around us. But our blindness to the flowering trees is another example of how we've lost our sense and sensibility around nature.

A friend of mine recently sent an article about how the Japanese wait, each year, for the cherry trees (*sakura, sakura*. . .) to blossom, a way of marking how spring has truly arrived. So concerned are the Japanese about the cherry blossoms that the government is expected to issue accurate predictions, much like the weather, on when the blossoms are due.

We don't need to be so obsessed, but I'd like to encourage the development of a sense of our own seasons, marked by blooming trees and shrubs. The yellow flame trees I wrote about lost their flowers over the Holy Week, a reminder of how ephemeral beauty can be. But we still have the golden shower trees (there are some particularly splendid examples along Hemady Avenue in Quezon City). You might also want to visit the UP Diliman campus, where kapok trees near the Lagoon and the Palma Hall parking lot have been "snowing" over the last few days.

In a few weeks, expect UP to be covered by the crimson canopies of fire trees. I'll try to get the word out as soon as they bloom, and hope other readers will alert me as well to nature's other dramatic shows.

Tabi po. . .

The pitfalls of Charter change

IF OUR HONORABLE CONGRESSmen really want changes in the present Constitution, they can do it in the most prudent way.

Since its ratification in 1788 or 218 years ago, the US Constitution has been amended only 27 times but never revised. The amendments—covering diverse subjects such as political rights, judicial reform, economic reform and the interpretation of the constitution itself—were simply introduced through joint resolutions of the US Congress. In fact, several proposed amendments did not get the nod of the US Congress.

For example, in the past, there were proposals to "to remove the limitation on the number of terms an individual may serve as President." However, many members of the US Congress would not push or even talk about the idea because it was not a popular issue then—as it is up to the present.

The last amendment to the US Constitution was made in 1992. In short, the US Constitution has not been "revisited" in the last 14 years.

Ours has been rewritten three times (1935, 1973 and 1987) since 1898. Constitutional amendments were also introduced in 1937 (women's rights), 1940 (extending the term of the President and Vice President), 1946 (parity rights) and during the Marcos era.

Some of the 27 amendments to the US Constitution are:

Amendment 26 (1971). The right of citizens of the United States, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of age.

Amendment 19 (1920). The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

Amendment 16 (1913). The Congress shall have the power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration.

Amendment 15 (1870). The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

Most of the amendments to the US Constitution are written in very few (mostly two) paragraphs. The US Congress has been amending their constitution for ages. I do not understand why the Philippine Congress hasn't done the same thing. Then, maybe, by now we would have had an ideal Constitution and we would have been enjoying stability, peace and progress, with our economy among the world's largest.

Revising or rewriting the Constitution only encourages repeated tinkering with the Constitution to suit the agenda of every sitting President. Good if the incumbent cares for the country and its people.

If this vicious cycle of changing the Constitution keeps on turning, then we can only watch our Asian neighbors and the rest of the world marching forward on the road to progress while our country remains stuck in the backwaters of underdevelopment.

**—REY S. PARADERO,
Violago Homes Phase 2,
Silangan, Quezon City**

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

A baseless and fabricated complaint

IN THE APRIL 11 COLUMN OF Ramon Tulfo, he commented on the charges filed by a certain Richelle Vineles against me. He said the complaint "is believable."

In an earlier rejoinder to an INQUIRER news item about this complaint, I clearly answered the charges of Vineles. The records will show that the complaint is baseless and the issues being peddled by the complainant are fabricated.

We did not know earlier that Vineles is a troublesome character who was dismissed as an employee of Padi's Restaurant before he worked in our family business. He even had the temerity to ask his former co-employees to join him in his vilification campaign against me. He even threatened them with bodily harm for refusing to do so.

**—REP. NANETTE CASTELO DAZA,
Fourth District, Quezon City**

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GMA knows what she should do

VOICES ON INQ7.NET

DURING THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION IN 2004, I voted for Bro. Eddie Villanueva because I believed that morality, integrity and wisdom would bring the country out of misery. I even openly said to my peers, "*Sana madaya na lang si FPJ para hindi siya manalo, pero hindi ibig sabihin na masama siyang tao, kundi dahil hindi ako sang-ayon sa kakayahan niya.*" And then Gloria won.

But when the "Hello, Garci" tape came out, it was as if I had been struck by lightning. I was not careful about what I wished for.

I don't know what is keeping GMA in office. Maybe she is scared that the truth will come out, or is it greed for power? Or she has made herself believe that she alone can run the government?

But her morality and integrity have deteriorated. She should save what is left of her reputation before time runs out. To end this crisis, Gloria knows deep in her heart what she should do.—**Hermie Sacil (via e-mail)**

* * *

Kidnapping and corruption are like the Bonifacio and Rizal monuments: once institutionalized, no amount of human effort can demolish them. We might as well sing "The Impossible Dream."—**Terry Herrera (via e-mail)**

* * *

It makes me sick to learn that Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who cheated Fernando Poe Jr., will confer on him the National Artist Award. If Poe were alive, he probably would wait for the next president before accepting the award.—**Fred Villaro, California (via e-mail)**

* * *

We ordinary citizens should remain hopeful and positive, and observe and follow our laws to prevent anarchy. (Remember May 1, 2001, when the opposition stirred up the masses which led to bloody riots?)

Let us not think small but think global. Let us not be content with producing products that are *puwede na* but let us make those that are *puwedeng-puwede*. Let us uphold the tradition of excellence that was once inseparable from the name Philippines. Remember the International Rice Research Institute? It still stands as the top agricultural research institution in Asia.

Let us preserve the country for our younger ones. Our elders did it for us.—**Domes Briones (via e-mail)**

* * *

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has got to go, and it's just a matter of time. The anti-government rallies will not stop and it is wise for her to think about the inevitable.

She is not so bad as President, but Filipinos need someone better. Unfortunately, the possible successors are not so good as we would like them to be and they will also fall short of the people's expectations.—**Joscar Francisco, Bahrain (via e-mail)**

* * *

There is always a better alternative to any given situation. However, the better alternative is not always best taken any time you want. Some words of advice: Leave the current President alone! Let her do her job and we'll see what the next few years of carrying reforms will produce. Six years is not enough to implement all the radical changes needed to uplift the living conditions of most Filipinos.

I am a Filipino living abroad, not by choice but out of necessity. How I would love to go back to the Philippines if the opportunity is there. I am very proud that we have a President who is an economist—not an actor, not a politician's widow, not a former military officer, not a former first lady of a dictator, not a militant. —**Jerry Jones (via e-mail)**

* * *

Let GMA submit herself to a polygraph test administered by Scotland Yard and supervised by the Vatican. Keep the PNP, NBI, DOJ, DILG, AFP and Comelec away from it, otherwise the result will be tainted and questionable.

One question to ask: Did she or didn't she cover up the truth on *jueteng* and the "Hello, Garci" case?

So long as the demands of truth are not met, our country and people will continue to suffer.
—Abraham V. Llera (via e-mail)

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Korean shipyard project faces protest

By Allan Macatuno
PDI Central Luzon Desk

SUBIC, ZAMBALES—The construction of what is deemed as the country's largest ship building facility here was met with protests by at least 200 families who are going to be displaced by the project.

Residents of Sitio Agusuhin here formed human barricades to prevent clearing operations on a 230-hectare lot along the Redondo Peninsula, the site of the 2.3 million-square meter shipyard here. It is within the Subic Bay Freeport Zone.

Members of the Samahan ng mga Nagkakaisang Residente ng Agusuhin (Samanra) expressed their dismay over the failure of Hanjin shipping company officials to give proper compensation for their houses and a relocation site.

More than 70 houses and other government structures, including schools, have already been demolished since February this year, according to Teresita Ogayon, a resident.

"We are willing to leave our place as long as they will give us just compensation and assure us that there will be a permanent site for relocation as they have promised," Ogayon said.

She said some of the houses had been demolished after residents sold them for low prices to the Korean shipping firm but the proposed relocation site has not been readied yet.

This rendered some 150 residents homeless. They were also forced to stay in their ruined houses while waiting to be transferred to the relocation area.

Residents placed several streamers in the area condemning the "unjust and deliberate destruction" of their property without being compensated properly.

They also denounced the demolition of three public school buildings in the area despite their strong opposition.

"Our local officials cannot even assure us that children here will be able to return to school ...," said Luvidico Salcedo, another resident and spokesperson of Samanra.

Tension gripped the area after the provincial government sent troops from the Special Action Force.

The shipping firm also deployed 12 private security guards.

Vice Gov. Ramon Lacbain II appealed for an amicable settlement.

Sonny Pumarada, Hanjin project coordinator, said there is no forced demolition but only dismantling because some of the houses have been bought and paid for by the Korean shipping firm.

JANI ARNAIZ/PDI VISAYAS BUREAU

WHERE ONCE A VILLAGE LAY
People try to live normal lives after tragedies as this farmer does, riding in his carabao past a cross that serves as a quiet reminder that on that spot once lay Guinsaugon, a village in St. Bernard, Southern Leyte that was teeming with life until a landslide brought an end to its existence.

Mystery surrounds delay in start of STL in Pampanga

CAMP OLIVAS, PAMPANGA—The state-sanctioned small town lottery (STL) has not been started in Pampanga, which has been dubbed as the "Vatican of jueteng."

Chief Supt. Alejandro Lapinid, Central Luzon police director, on Thursday confirmed the delay in the test-run, or actual operation, of the STL in Pampanga but could not tell the reasons for it. The STL was supposed to work as an antidote to jueteng, the illegal numbers game.

"The operator has not coordinated with us in the police," he said of the Sun Cove Corp. that in March obtained the STL license from the state-owned Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office.

"Perhaps they're still organizing," he said.

Sources had said that some of the companies that were given licenses to operate STL were owned by Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda, believed to be the country's biggest gambling lord.

He said he could not also tell if the delay stemmed from any resistance by displaced operators or financiers of jueteng, which was stopped in the region since May 2005 when whistleblowers claimed that close relatives of President Macapagal-Arroyo were among the game's protectors.

Various estimates placed the displaced employees in the region at over 100,000.

Lapinid ruled out reports that the STL operator needed to settle the terms of sharing with the regional Philippine National Police, an arrangement that reportedly existed with jueteng financiers before.

"There are clear implementing rules and regulations (from the PCSO) so we need not talk of anything," he said.

Delayed

Romualdo Quinones, chief of the PCSO's STL project management office in Manila, could not also explain the delay in Sun Cove's operations in Pampanga, the President's home province. Her son, Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, represents the second district.

Lake Tahoe Gaming Corp. and Sunset Bay Research and Marketing Group were operating on schedule in Angeles City and Bataan, respectively, he said.

Earlier, he denied reports that suspected jueteng lord Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda owned any or all of these STL license-holding companies.

The question of Sun Cove's operations has arisen from several displaced *cobradores* (collectors) who, for almost a month now, go around several northern villages in the City of San Fernando, the capital of Pampanga, gathering bets for jueteng.

"We're told that we are going to be hired for the STL. But we have not been called to a meeting or issued identification cards. We'd like to be employed again, although legally now through STL," a *cobrador* told the INQUIRER.

"If STL is the solution to jueteng, why has it not started employing us?" he asked.

As the STL remained non-existent in Pampanga now, police reports showed that jueteng operations were inactive in the region. In March, the police in Tarlac arrested three jueteng collectors in Barangay Marubog in Camiling town. Arrests for *lotteng*, an illegal variant of the jueteng and the state-run lotto, were made in Barangay Nonong in San Luis town in Aurora and in Barangay Catmon in Sta. Maria town in Bulacan.

Based on the same report, jueteng was reported to be "negative" in Angeles City and in Bataan where STL was on its test run during the same period.

By April, police made jueteng raids in the City of San Fernando and Sto. Tomas town, also in Pampanga.

However, field reports said jueteng was being run in a more guerrilla manner. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Farmers told: Clean boots mean good crops

By Delmar Cariño
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

NATUMUGAN NA TAYO!

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—Cordillera farmers had gotten used to wearing rubber boots while tending to their vegetable farms.

But International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) scientists in Los Baños, Laguna, said while the boots give comfort and protection, farmers must regularly wash them as their soles and edges could become means of transporting pathogens or disease-causing organisms.

Rhodesia Celoy–Manzan, an IRRI assistant scientist who specializes in molecular genetics, said rubber boots, when soiled and muddy, become potentially hazardous in moving potent organisms from farm to farm.

"The transport of these microbes could affect the natural balance between pathogenic (disease causing) and beneficial organisms in the farmlands," she said.

"The uncleaned soil in the boots could introduce new pathogens that could tilt soil balance in favor of disease causing microbes."

Once this happens, diseases will later affect or destroy the plants, she said.

Speaking at a gathering of farmers at the Benguet State University here recently, Manzan said the region's vegetable farmers must see to it that their boots are thoroughly cleaned and washed when they retire after a day's work or before they decide to move to another farm.

The advice goes to the province's close to 300,000 farmers in 13 towns.

Department of Agriculture records showed that 39,977 hectares of the province's total land area are devoted to agriculture with an annual average production of more or less 465,073.23 metric tons of vegetables.

CANCER-CAUSING

Water district told to replace asbestos pipes

MAASIN CITY—SOUTHERN Leyte Rep. Roger Mercado has ordered the local water district to replace its asbestos pipes, saying these are carcinogenic.

But Gaudencio Alejandria, Maasin Water District (MWD) manager, said the agency has no funds to immediately replace these pipes.

He, however, said he did not see anything wrong with using asbestos pipes. "Unless it is inhaled, asbestos is safe."

Mercado said he was surprised when he learned that the MWD still had 5 km of asbestos pipes in the city's water system.

"It's (asbestos) carcinogenic. Cancer is the number one cause of death in the city and it may have something to do with it," Mercado told the INQUIRER.

He said he could not understand why these pipes were not replaced when the use of asbestos material had been banned.

Asked if he could use his Priority Development Assistant Funds, Mercado replied: "We have no funds for its replacement."

Alejandria said he had records that showed cancer was only the number four cause of death in the city, contrary to the claim of Mercado. The most common of these, he added, was breast cancer.

The pipes had been there since the 1960s, Alejandria said. "G.I. pipes were unavailable at that time and if there was these were too expensive."

Alejandria, however, said that every time they had money to improve the water system, they replaced the existing pipes with polyvinyl chloride (PVC) pipes.

He said he wanted to replace the asbestos pipes because these easily break.

Alejandria said they would replace the 5-km asbestos pipes if money was already available.

"Maybe by the end of this year, we could replace it," he added. *Jani Arnaiz, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Palace tells Baguio flyover foes to start lobby

BAGUIO CITY—MALACAÑANG officials have advised three Baguio old timers to fight for the withdrawal of a city council supporting a controversial flyover project here.

President Macapagal-Arroyo last year instructed the Department of Public Works and Highways to realign funds meant for a flyover that was introduced to consume P44 million in savings left from the rehabilitation of the Marcos Highway.

But Palace chief of staff, Michael Defensor, said her instructions could not be fulfilled because the terms of a loan that financed the highway's rehabilitation restricts its use to the project site.

Former Baguio Mayor Virginia de Guia, newspaper editor Cecille Afable and museum curator Leonora San Agustin, who are in their late 80s, picketed the Marcos Highway during Ms Arroyo's Holy Week vacation here to draw her attention.

The three old timers have been campaigning against the project since 2000 because the project would alter the aesthetics of the area.

De Guia, in particular, said DPWH was mistaken when it projected heavy traffic in the area to justify a flyover.

The Marcos Highway and Kennon Road, both major access routes to the summer capital, meet at a junction where the Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center stands.

The DPWH earlier introduced a vehicular underpass project using the Marcos Highway savings, which would have linked the highway and Kennon Road. Environmental concerns compelled the agency to drop this project.

"There is nothing illegal about [the flyover project]," Defensor said.

So the Palace suggested that the three women undertake instead an intense lobby locally to attack the presumed social acceptability of the project, he told reporters here on Monday.

Defensor, a former environment secretary, said by reversing the council endorsement now, the government would have a legal basis for rethinking its flyover contract. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Army says NPA lost 143 cadres last year

LUCENA CITY—COMMUNIST NEW PEOPLE'S Army rebels operating in Bicol and Southern Tagalog lost a total of 143 cadres last year, the top official of the military's Southern Luzon Command based in Camp Nakar here reported yesterday.

Lt. Gen. Pedro Cabuay Jr., Solcom chief, claimed the figures represented the total number of guerrillas killed in combat or captured by government forces in Southern Luzon.

Cabuay said 782 NPA regulars and civilian allies surrendered as a result of the peace and reconciliation program of the government.

The military official said the figures were based on updated reports of the military intelligence, combat and civil-military services.

Solcom reported that 88 villages under the control or influence of the Communist Party of the Philippines in Southern Luzon, had been "de-influenced" as a result of sociocivic and military operations.

The military claimed that based on its latest count, a total of 118 assorted firearms were seized from the insurgents in the two regions, long deemed bastions of the revolutionary movement.

CPP spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal scoffed at the military figures.

"The figures were all drawings, products of the propaganda mills of the enemies. They were all part of the prevailing quota system in the military. Feeling the pressure, most officials in the field resort to fakery of statistics," Rosal said in a mobile phone interview. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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ROUNDUP

Runway repair urged

COTABATO CITY—Transportation officials were asked Tuesday to start the long-delayed rehabilitation of the runway of Maguindanao's Awang Airport. At present, landing aircraft confront pebbles and sand grains from the runway's asphalt potholes. Maguindanao Rep. Simeon Datumanong said the rehabilitation would have been part of the unused Asian Development Bank loan program for airport projects in Luzon and Mindanao. Datumanong said the loan agreement had been cancelled because of the government's failure to provide local equity. He said the Department of Transportation and Communications revived the rehabilitation plan by asking Congress to provide an additional P25 million to its P40-million budget. But he said the DOTC had yet to start the work. Datumanong said if the project was delayed further, he would call on DOTC officials, including Secretary Leandro Mendoza, to explain. *Nash Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Soft drinks plant robbed

CAMP DIEGO SILANG, San Fernando City—Fifteen men in black police uniforms and bulletproof vests barged early Monday into a soft drinks plant in Rosario, La Union, and took more than P4 million in cash and checks. Police said the men arrived in a black Isuzu Trooper at the Pepsi-Cola plant in Barangay Udiao at about 1:20 a.m. One of them told the guard that his group was inspecting the facilities. When the guard demanded the group's mission order, one of the visitors poked his Armalite rifle at him, took his service pistol and locked him in the guard house. The other gunmen barged into the building where the plant's main office is. Some employees were then making an accounting of sales and collection the previous day.
Peter La. Julian, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

5 drown in Isabela

ILAGAN, Isabela—Five people drowned on Black Saturday in separate places in Isabela, belated police reports said. The victims were Emmagrace Berras, 53; her daughter Vanessa, 15; and granddaughter Jovy, 5, all of Ilagan town; Beverly Rivera, 11, of Angadanan town; and Ma. Rica Teresa Garcia, 5, of Santiago City. The Berras girls were swimming in the Pinacanauan River when they were swept away by strong current. Emmagrace tried to save them but also drowned. Rivera drowned while taking a bath in the river in Barangay Allangigan in Angadanan, while Garcia drowned at the Batal-Nagassican River in Santiago City. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Cooperative exec killed

CITY OF MALOLOS—An official of a cooperative here was shot and killed by unidentified men in Barangay Calvario in Meycauayan on Monday, police said. Medel Medalla, 50, of the San Pablo Multi-purpose Cooperative and watchman in Barangay San Pablo, was riding on a motorcycle in Meycauayan when he was shot in the head and chest. Sources from the cooperative said Medalla had earlier survived a recent assassination attempt in Guiguinto town. Police have yet to determine if the victim was killed because of his work as cooperative official or as village watchman. *Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Arson suspect's sketch out

LEGAZPI CITY—The Bureau of Fire Protection has released a sketch of one of the suspected arsonists behind the series of fires here. The sketch was based on the description given by three witnesses working in the burnt establishments. Mayor Noel Rosal announced a P50,000 reward for those who can identify and capture the suspect. Chief Insp. Gilbert Dolot, city fire marshal, said the BFP joined forces with the National Bureau of Investigation, the police and the Armed Forces in solving the case. *Ephraim Aguilar, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Aklan awardee

FORMER Assemblyman Jose Tumbokon has been named Outstanding Aklanon Awardee for Public Service in the province's 50th year celebration on April 25. Gov. Carlito Marquez announced that the selection was committee's decision. Tumbokon's award caps 50 years of public service. He started his career as messenger, rose through the ranks and served as chief of office before he became assemblyman and presidential adviser. He was appointed minister of state of information and official spokesperson of the Interim Batasan Pambansa and the Kilusang Bagong Lipunan during the Marcos regime.

Most campus crimes involve rape and fraternity-related violence

By Alcuin Papa

THE MAJORITY OF CRIMES committed by students in Metro Manila last year involved rape and fraternity-related violence, a civic group said yesterday.

Citing statistics from the Philippine National Police, Arsenio Organo, chair of a group called Pugad Lawin, said 28 of every 100 reported crimes committed by students involved rape and 35 were related to physical injuries. The balance involved petty crimes like theft, acts of lasciviousness, vandalism, etc.

"We believe these cases of physical injuries involve fraternity-related violence. But we are also concerned with the number of rape cases," Organo told reporters at a news forum in Quezon City.

Organo said his group had not been able to obtain statistics on drug-related crimes involving students, but "we have a feeling the numbers here will be high, too."

Organo's group is involved in a new program aimed at curbing campus violence by organizing students. The undertaking, called Student Crime Prevention Network (SCPN), involves the Department of Education, the National Police Commission, the Department of Interior and Local Government, the Commission on Higher Education and other civic groups.

Dr. Lilian Enriquez of the CHEd-National Capital Region told the forum that the SCPN would bring parents, students and school officials together to organize crime-prevention councils in schools throughout the country. The councils will ensure that campuses are "safe, secure, peaceful and conducive to the physical, mental and emotional well-being of students."

Among the duties of the councils are reporting crimes, formulating prevention programs and holding information drives.

"Students are most vulnerable to crimes. So they should take an active role in crime prevention," Enriquez said. She said that the councils would target fraternity-related violence, incidences of pornography, homosexuality, alcoholism and drugs.

While she said that there had been crimes perpetrated by teachers on students, these are just a "handful." She lamented that there was a lack of training of teachers in values education.

Dr. Virginia Silvestre of the DepEd-National Capital Region said efforts were under way to integrate crime prevention into the basic education curriculum. But she pointed out that other modules like solid waste management, drug education, reproductive health and HIV education required equal time and space in the curriculum.

Fil-Am starts LIFE, vows to plant 1M trees

From page A1

LIFE will develop modules detailing the value of the project and the proper way of planting and caring for various tree species, including mangroves, for distribution to its stakeholders.

200,000 trees a year

LIFE is aiming for 200,000 trees a year.

A backyard, a subdivision, a park, a private resort, a mountain, denuded forest land—any open space that is not prone to logging or commercial use of timber—are sites being considered by LIFE.

The group is also seeking communities that are sincerely interested in saving their natural resources, Eusebio said.

La Salle intends to transfer responsibility over the project to the communities after three years.

"We need more than a million trees. For our part, we just want to be able to look back and say we planted a million and we did it for Mother Earth," Eusebio said.

The man carries the burden of doing something for the planet right in his homeland.

US environment agency

"I worked for a polluter for 10 years," said Eusebio, recalling his stint in the chemical industry in the United States after receiving his master's degree in chemical engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

LIFE staff members teach barangay officials in Pandacan, Manila, how to use a compass and GPS for profiling. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Eusebio then spent the next 30 years with the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). He was head of a team of scientists developing pollution control devices with the National Air Pollution Administration, the EPA's predecessor.

When the EPA was created, Eusebio was assigned to its regional office and spent most of his years in Washington D.C., developing regulations and federal environmental programs for the states.

Soon Eusebio flew to Indonesia to do various environmental projects, including saving Lake Tondano, and other consultancy jobs. He, however, found himself looking to do more.

"I've earned many dollars doing reports that get stuck in the shelf because you don't have the people who will do it," Eusebio said.

Pilot project in Lumban

Returning to the Philippines upon the prodding of La Salle Br. Armin Luistro FSC, the man found the people he needed in the barangays of Lumban, Laguna.

Lumban's 16 barangays are the pilot project site for LIFE's adopted watershed. Building on its brick-by-brick concept of environmental preservation, LIFE chose one of the 24 sub-basins—the Lumban-Pagsanjan sub-basin.

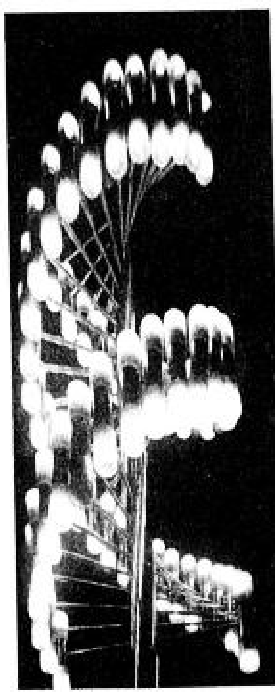
LIFE has trained the barangay leaders of Lumban to profile their barangays. With a compass, a line meter and sometimes a global position system (GPS) device, the officials, housewives and fishermen surveyed their areas for the barangay profile map.

The maps will be used for the natural resource management plan and help the barangay leaders identify and address the causes of frequent problems in the community.

The profile maps show the fishpens, hand pumps, houses, plantations, ricefields, piggeries, churches and other landmarks in the barangay.

"This is the thrust of LIFE: To bring education to the barangays, to people who may never have entered a classroom but who know life all too well," Eusebio said.

"The satisfaction is in seeing people who know nothing of what you do, holding them by the hand and seeing them become experts," he said.



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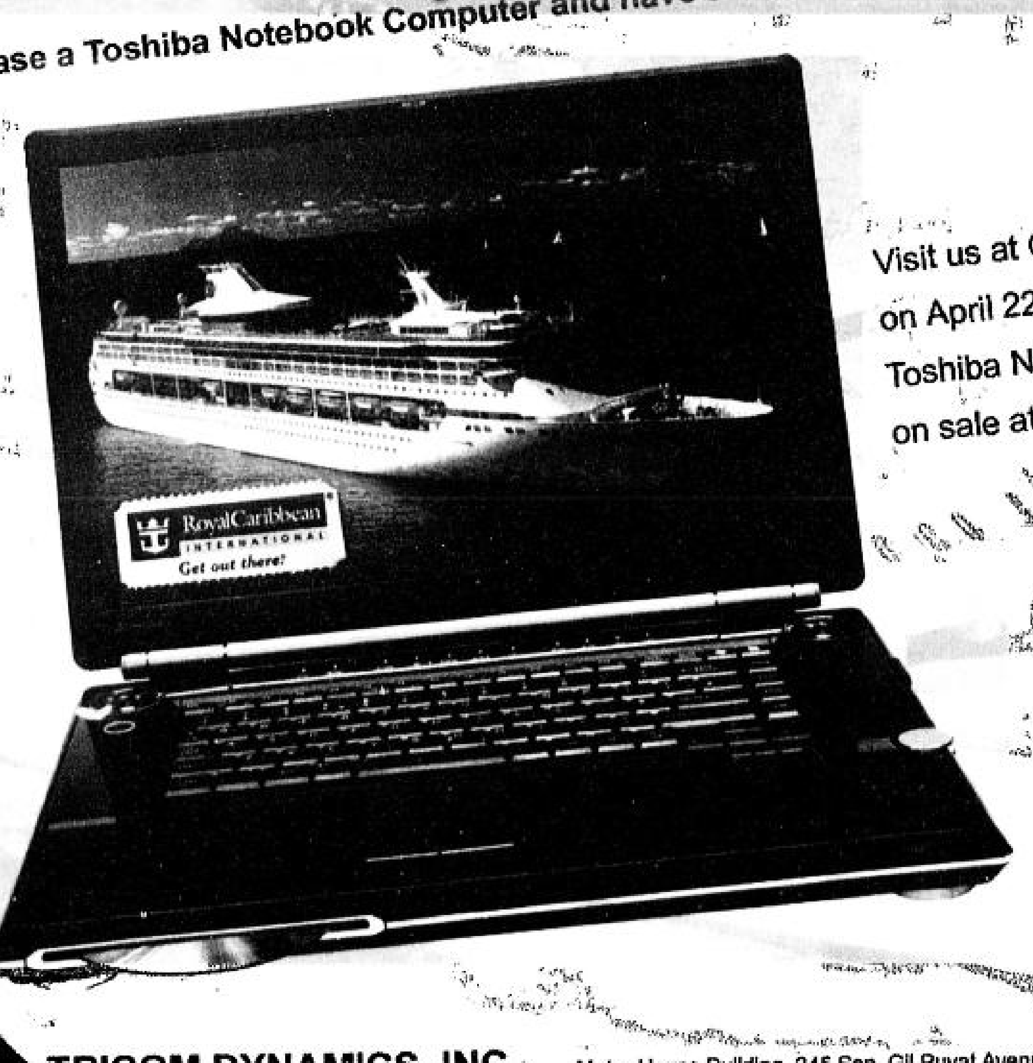

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2 Filipinos 'admitted' Saudi slays, says DFA

From page A1

Filipinos as "accessories" in the gruesome crime.

The alleged accessories were also being held by Saudi police, who at one point had taken in up to "52 Filipinos" for questioning, the DFA said in a statement. Of the 52, six were women.

The DFA said that of the six people who went missing, three were confirmed dead while the others were among the Filipinos who were rounded up.

The three who were mistakenly reported as missing were in good physical condition when found in detention by consulate officials.

The DFA continued to withhold the names of those arrested and of those declared missing.

Meeting with investigators

Philippine Consul General Pendosina Lomondot was scheduled yesterday to meet with Saudi investigators for the identification of the body parts.

The Philippine consulate in Jeddah said up to 52 Filipinos had been detained by police as of April 17. It was not immediately clear how many were still being held as of yesterday.

Human body parts inside black garbage plastic bags were found in Sina'alayh district south of Jeddah on April 4.

The discovery led Saudi police to pick up a large number of Filipino workers in the city. An INQUIRER source in Jeddah earlier estimated that more than 100 Filipinos, including businessmen, were held for questioning.

Saudi ambassador summoned

Earlier yesterday, the "mass arrest" in the city prompted the DFA to summon the Saudi ambassador over human rights concerns.

Ambassador Mohammed Ameen Mohammed Wali met with acting Foreign Secretary Rafael Seguis, who conveyed the concerns of President Macapagal-Arroyo over the arrests.

Seguis also said that the Philippine consulate should be granted access to the detainees in accordance with the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations.

The DFA statement was silent on the possible motive for the killings. Earlier, the INQUIRER source said members of the Filipino community in Jeddah were inclined to believe that a turf war over the illegal drug trade could have been behind the carnage.

Drugs, lottery and liquor

The consulate said the manhunt for the suspects was conducted alongside an investigation of drug trafficking, underground lottery and illegal consumption of liquor.

A report early this week in the Arabian daily Okaz said one of the suspects revealed where the victims' bodies were dumped—an area called Industrial City in southern Jeddah.

The report added that the recovered of body parts bore signs of torture.

The murders, the paper said, were carried out in a house in the Ghulail District east of the Jeddah-Mecca highway.

Updates

Malacañang said it wanted to know the whos and whys of the crime.

"Like the rest of the Filipino people, we all want to know the motive and identify the suspects involved in these gruesome [murders]. The government shall continue to work closely with the Saudi authorities to ensure that no stone is left unturned in the investigation," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said in a statement.

He assured the public of updates on the case.

"As President Arroyo has instructed, the public will be updated every step of the way. In the meantime, we appeal to the media and other sectors concerned to refrain from speculating and await the final result of the probe," Bunye said. *With a report from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

Stove fueled by 'tuba-tuba' launched in Leyte

From page A1

oil stove for over a year now, said the new stove was not only user-friendly but efficient and affordable.

The stove cooks food faster than traditional stoves. "It takes only about 20 minutes to cook rice with the oil plant stove, while with a kerosene stove this usually takes about 30 minutes," Balaga said.

Launching

A single-burner plant oil stove costs P2,000, while a two-burner costs P3,400. But the stove's local distributor has been selling the stove at a 25-percent discount until the end of the month, while those who joined the field test of the product like Balaga were given a 50-percent discount.

Protos was officially launched in Leyte on April 6, with German Ambassador Axel Weisshaupt, BHS officials and experts from Germany in attendance.

Also present were Leyte Representatives Carmen Cari (5th district) and Remedios Petilla (1st district), Gov. Carlos Jericho Petilla, LSU president Dr. Paciencia Milan and regional directors of government agencies.

BHS officials said that aside from providing people with a low-cost stove and livelihood opportunities, Protos could help some 2.5 billion people worldwide who still cook their food over open fires.

Millions die every year as a result of indoor pollution caused by, among other things, open-fire cooking, according to the World Health Organization.

Oil from plants burns without harming a person's health because it is carbon dioxide-neutral, according to BSH officials.

Another environmental problem that the new stove could address is the cutting of trees. It is estimated that a family could use up to two tons of wood per year.

Sustainable development

Claus-Peter Hutter, president of the international foundation European Nature Heritage Fund (Euronatur) that helped fund the development of Protos, said the BHS plant oil stove project "contributes to public health, to environmental education, to sustainable development, and to the protection of biological diversity."

He said Protos was a good example of a tangible, concrete contribution of a private corporation to sustainable development.

The field test for the stove was undertaken in Leyte from November 2004 until last month, with the Leyte State University (LSU), a partner of the BHS, overseeing the testing. The test covered some 100 households and small restaurants.

Results of the tests showed that users liked the stove.

The introduction of Protos in the province has provided livelihoods to people marketing the stove and to those involved in its production because most of its parts are locally produced. BHS produces only the "technically delicate" stove burner.

Oil processing center

The production of plant oils for the stove is also providing additional income to some local farmers.

In Barangay Ciabu, about 20 km from Baybay town proper, the Ciabu Primary Multipurpose Cooperative runs a small-scale oil processing center whose financing comes mostly from the LSU-based Plant Oil Technology Center.

Representative Cari and Baybay Mayor Carlos Cari funded the project while cooperative members provided free labor.

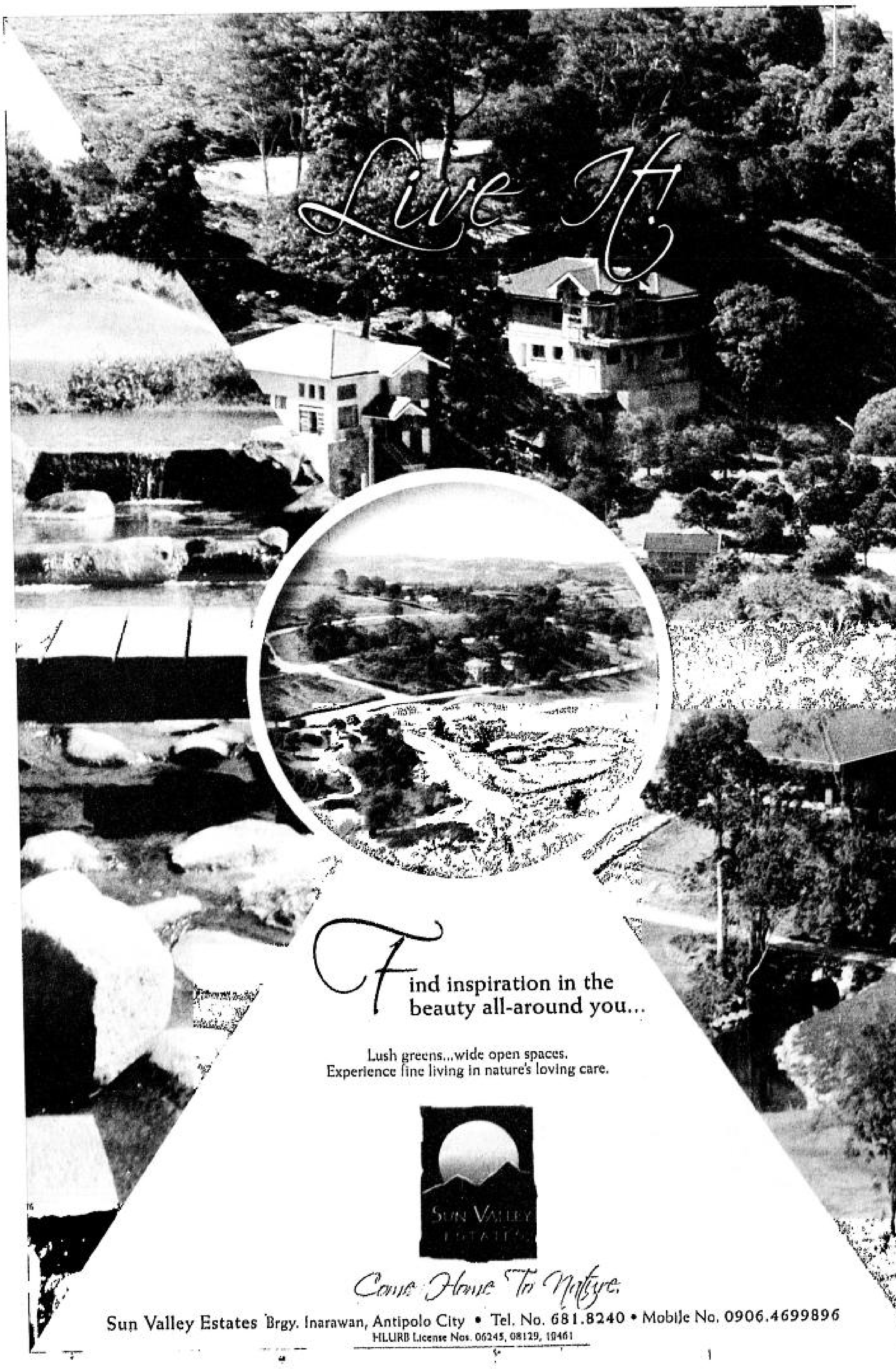
The center, which has a capacity to produce about 130 liters of oil per day, is selling coconut oil to users of the stove for P12 per "lapad" (350 ml bottle), P28 per liter, P100 per gallon and P500 for a 5-gallon container.

The price is lower than kerosene, which sells for at least P36 a liter, and refined oil, which is retailed at P35 a liter.

A few meters from the barangay proper of Ciabu, the cooperative has a plantation of Jatropha, which is locally known as "tuba-tuba," another source of plant oil.

The Department of Energy is encouraging the planting of Jatropha as part of its measures to cushion the impact of record world oil prices. The PNOC Energy Development Corp. said the plant's 37-percent oil content could be used as a substitute for diesel fuel.

"The demand for alternative renewable energy sources is growing rapidly particularly in developing countries, where cost-effective energy is critical for poverty alleviation and economic development," said Leonardo Sibbaluca, regional executive director for Eastern Visayas of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.



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Palace orders immediate implementation of ID system

From page A1

number for quick reference and profiling.

He said that government agencies would make it mandatory for all individuals dealing with them to use the national ID to facilitate their transactions. "We would also encourage the private sector to do the same," said Defensor.

On Wednesday, the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the national ID system under Executive Order No. 420 and rejected claims that it violated an individual's right to privacy.

Andres Bautista, dean of the Far Eastern University Institute of Law, said the court decision was a good one because it ruled the ID system was not compulsory and that any information requested was already available in the public domain.

Phantom fears

Bunye hailed the Supreme Court decision "not only because of its contribution to national security but its effect in facilitating the delivery of vital government programs and services to the Filipino people."

"Issues adverting to infringement of human rights are phantom fears," said Bunye. "The system has enough safeguards to protect the citizen from imagined violations of the right to privacy."

Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno told the INQUIRER that there was no need to gather data at the barangay level. He said that any data needed was already in the hands of the government, such as the GSIS, Comelec and the Land Transportation Office.

"Privacy and privileged personal information will not lose their legal protection under existing laws as a consequence of the Supreme Court decision," Puno said.

When the national ID system was first proposed as an instrument against terrorism, information gathered from the barangays was planned to form its database.

Now, Puno said, the DILG would only be a support organization for the ID project.

MS ARROYO

"What is imminent is the consolidation of the ID cards of the different agencies. I don't think we will do data-gathering on anyone," Puno said. He said that the National Census and Statistical Office could handle the consolidation.

'For people in gov't'

In Lapulapu City, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the high court's decision did not cover private citizens as the government had intended.

"The national ID sustained by the Supreme Court is really for the moment to facilitate administrative aspects for people in the government, especially in transacting business with the government," said Ermita, who was attending the three-day international conference on counterterrorism.

He emphasized the importance of a national ID system especially in the fight against criminality, insurgency and terrorism. But he denied claims by human rights advocates the project would be used to harass individuals and violate their privacy.

Gradual rise of police state

The leftist group Bagong Alyansang Makabayan said it would soon be necessary for all citizens to get an ID. He said it may be required whenever they transact business with the government, such as applying for various licenses and registering to engage in business.

"We are now seeing the gradual rise of a police state and the evolution of the real Orwellian Big Brother. Freedom-loving citizens must act now to defend their rights, including the right to privacy," Reyes said. *With reports from Norman Bordadora, Philip C. Tubeza and Jolene R. Bulambot, PDI Visayas Bureau*

IN THE KNOW

Unified multipurpose ID system

IN APRIL 2005, President Macapagal-Arroyo signed Executive Order No. 420, which "requires all government-owned and -controlled corporations to streamline and harmonize their identification systems."

The EO provides guidelines for the adoption of a "unified multipurpose identification system for government" by all government agencies and GOCCs that issue ID cards to their members.

Militant groups opposed the EO, fearing that a national ID system would amount to invasion of privacy, violation of human rights and curtailment of civil liberties.

Those pushing for the establishment of a national ID system believe it will reduce the costs of having multiple ID cards and of the maintenance of redundant databases, make government transactions more convenient, and help in anticrime and antiterror campaigns.

The data to be collected for the national ID card include the holder's name, home address, sex, picture, signature, date of birth, place of birth, marital status, names of parents, height, weight, prints of two index fingers and two thumbs, any prominent distinguishing features like moles, as well as tax identification number.

The signing of the EO came in the wake of a Social Weather Stations survey saying that 6 out of 10 Filipinos approved of a national ID system because it would combat terrorism.

Earlier pushed by then President Fidel Ramos as part of the government's security and counterinsurgency measures, the proposal for a national ID system was shot down by the Supreme Court in 1998.

The tribunal ruled that the system posed a "clear and present danger" and would violate the right to privacy guaranteed by the Constitution. ***Kate Pedroso, PDI Research***

Aussies launch aid program

DAVAO CITY—THE AUSTRALIAN government yesterday launched a multimillion-dollar aid program to help disadvantaged children in the South.

Called "The Children Friendly Movement," the five-year $17-million program is being funded by the Australian Agency for International Development (Ausaid) and run jointly with the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef).

The program will focus on 10 local government areas on the islands of Mindanao and Samar.

"The Australian Government is pleased to continue its partnership with Unicef in promoting the welfare of Filipino children," Australian Ambassador Tony Hely said.

"We have been partners since 1989 and this new Australian funding reaffirms our commitment to helping the Philippines."

Australia has been the largest donor to Unicef's country program for children in the past six years.

"Compared to the rest of the Philippines, the children of Mindanao and especially those in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindahao (ARMM) continue to face stark inequalities and disparities brought about by a host of issues, such as poverty, malnutrition, lack of basic education, trafficking and other forms of abuse," said Unicef's country representative Nicholas Alipui. *AFP*

BCDA

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

PUBLIC RELATIONS CONSULTING SERVICES OF BCDA (REBIDDING)

1. Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA) through its 2006 Budget intends to apply the sum of Three Million Five Hundred Thousand Pesos (P3,500,000.00) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for Public Relations Consulting Services. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at the opening of the financial proposals.
2. BCDA calls for the submission of Letters of Intent (LOIs) from potential bidders to apply for eligibility and short listing for Public Relations Consulting Services. Issuance of the Eligibility Documents will be on 04-09 May 2006. Eligibility Documents may be purchased by the interested Bidders upon payment of nonrefundable fee in the amount of Two Thousand Pesos Only (Php2,000.00). The method of payment will be in the form of cash, cashier's check or manager's check. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
3. Interested consultants must submit their LOIs not later than 5:00 pm on 09 May 2006 at the Bases Conversion and Development Authority, 2nd Floor, Bonifacio Technology Center, Fort Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City and secure the Eligibility Documents. Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis. Pre-eligibility conference will be held on 12 May 2006 at 9:00 a.m. The last day for the submission of the accomplished Eligibility Documents shall be on the date of the opening of Eligibility Documents 19 May 2006 at 9:00 am. Only those that are short listed will be entitled to submit bids.
4. The BAC shall draw up the short list of consultants from those who have submitted LOIs and have been determined as eligible both in accordance with the provisions of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184) and its Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A). The short list of prospective bidders shall be at most three (3) eligible consultants. The criteria and rating system for short listing are:
   a) The Consultant must be a reputable public relations firm with at least five (5) years business operation.
   b) The key personnel of the Consultant must have at least three (3) years experience in handling public relations and/or crisis management accounts
   c) The Consultant must have handled at least five (5) similar public relations and/or crisis management projects involving major clientele
   d) The Consultants should have handled at least two (2) government PR and/or crisis management accounts
   e) The Consultant shall be assessed based on the most favorable compliance with the criteria stated above
5. LOIs must be delivered by hand, through mail, or facsimile to the address below on 04-09 May 2006, from 8:00am to 5:00 pm.
6. The Pre-bid conference for those who will qualify to participate in the bidding will be held on 13 June 2006, 9:00 a.m. Only those who will attend the pre-bid conference will be allowed to participate in the bidding.
7. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the IRR-A of R.A. 9184 and is restricted to Filipino citizens or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest belonging to citizens of the Philippines. In accordance with IRR-A of R.A 9184 only bids from short listed consultants will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in the Eligibility Documents. In accordance with the IRR-A of R.A. 9184 the contract will only be awarded to the Highest Rated and Responsive Bidder who was determined as such during post-qualification.
   The BCDA shall evaluate bids using the Quality Based Evaluation (QBE) procedure. The criteria and rating system for the evaluation of bids shall be provided in the Instructions to Bidders.
8. Interested consultants may obtain further information from the Bases Conversion and Development Authority at the address given below from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday to Friday.
9. The contract shall be completed within one (1) year.
10. Bases Conversion and Development Authority reserves the right to reject any and all bids, annul the bidding process, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

Bases Conversion and Development Authority
Ms. Aileen An. R. Zosa
Chairperson, BAC for Consultancy
2nd Floor, Bonifacio Technology Center
Fort Bonifacio Global City, Taguig 1634
Tel/Fax No. 8161015
Email address: arzosa@bcda.gov.ph
Website address: www.bcda.gov.ph

(Sgd.) Aileen An. R. Zosa
Chairperson
Bids and Award Committee for Consultancy

(PDI-April 21 & 28, 2006)

PNOC EXPLORATION CORPORATION
Building I, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila
Telephone Nos. 893-6001 to 47 local 2194
Direct Line: 840-1614 / Fax No.: (632) 840-1619

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO RE-BID

PNOC Exploration Corporation (PNOC EC), through its Corporate Budget of 2006 intends to apply the sum of Php246,598,000.00 being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the **ON-CALL LIGHTERAGE SERVICES** (the "Project"). Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.

PNOC EC now invites sealed bids from eligible Bidders for the **ON-CALL LIGHTERAGE SERVICES**. The contract duration for the Project is One (1) year.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from PNOC EC's Procurement Section (c/o Mr. George N. Alejandro) starting April 21, 2006 upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of Pesos: Two Thousand Five Hundred (Php2,500.00). The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **May 10, 2006, 3:00 P.M.** at the PNOC EC Conference Room, Bldg. 1, Energy Center, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be submitted in three (3) sets each to PNOC EC's Bids and Awards Committee not later than 2:00 P.M. on **May 24, 2006**. The bids including the eligibility requirements shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter. **Late Bids shall not be accepted.**

PNOC EC reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

This publication is also posted in our website at www.pnoc-ec.com.ph and in the DBM website at www.procurementservice.net.

Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–April 21 & 28, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
WESTERN VISAYAS MEDICAL CENTER
Mandurriao, Iloilo City
Fax No. 321-17-97
E-mail Address: wvmc@mozcom.com

Project Reference Number 06-001

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The DOH-Western Visayas Medical Center through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers / contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following projects.

NAME OF PROJECT	LOCATION	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT	CONTRACT DURATION
A. Supply of Security Services for Western Visayas Medical Center, Don Jose Monfort Memorial Hospital, Mental Health Unit and Drug Rehab	Mandurriao, Iloilo City Pototan, Iloilo Barotac Nuevo, Iloilo	P 3,669,640.00	12 months from date of contract signing
B. Supply of Janitorial Services for Western Visayas Medical Center, Don Jose Monfort Memorial Hospital and Mental Health Unit	Mandurriao, Iloilo City Pototan, Iloilo Barotac Nuevo Iloilo	P 3,240,000.00	
C. Laundry Services for Western Visayas Medical Center	Mandurriao, Iloilo City	P 780,000.00	

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed as follows:

	SCHEDULE		
	Security Services	Janitorial Services	Laundry Services
1. Submission of Letters of Intent (LOI)		May 4, 2006	
2. Submission of Eligibility Documents		May 5, 2006	
3. Eligibility Check		May 8, 2006	
4. Issuance of Bid Documents		May 10-16, 2006	
5. Site Inspection		May 11-15, 2006	
6. Pre-Bid Conference		May 17, 2006	
7. Opening of Bids		May 30, 2006	
8. Bid Evaluation		June 1 to June 15, 2006	
9. Post-qualification		June 22, 2006	
10. Notice of Award		July 7, 2006	

The Pre-Bid Conference and Opening of Bids will be held on the above stated dates at 10:00 o'clock AM in the Executive Conference Room, Western Visayas Medical Center, Iloilo City.

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount to the DOH-Western Visayas Medical Center cashier.

PROJECT	COST OF BID DOCUMENTS
Supply of Security Services	
Supply of Janitorial Services	
Supply of Laundry Services	

The DOH Western Visayas Medical Center assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses, incurred in the preparation of the bid.

The Western Visayas Medical Center reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the Bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidders.

(Sgd.) GINA SOPHIA G. MONDEJAR
BAC - Chairman

(PDI – April 21 & 28, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
CITY OF BAIS
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The City Government of Bais invites interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply and delivery of the hereunder requirements:

ITEM	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT (ABC)
1) P.R. No. 271-06 – Various construction materials for Rehabilitation of City Hall Annex Building, Bais City, (Phase I) to be taken from the 20% Development Fund	P2,055,685.00

Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.

In order to qualify, bidders should conform to the eligibility criteria as prescribed under Sec. 23.11 of the IRR-A of R.A. 9184.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary documents will result in the disqualification of the bidder.

All other particulars relative to the procurement process shall be govern by the implementing Rules and Regulations of RA 9184 otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act.

Pre-bid conference will be conducted at the Office of the City Mayor, this city, on **May 2, 2006 at 1:30 P.M.**

Bid documents can be obtained upon payment of a non-refundable fee equivalent to the total amount of the ABC of the items in which interested bidders intend to bid, in accordance with the following rates:

Below P50,000.00	– 0.5% but not less than P100.00
P50,000 but not more than P100,000.00	– 0.45% but not less than P250.00
P100,001.00 but not more than P200,000.00	– 0.4% but not less than P450.00
P200,001.00 – P350,000.00	– 0.35% but not less than P800.00
P350,001.00 – P500,000.00	– 0.3% but not less than P1,225.00
P500,001.00 – P1,000,000.00	– 0.2% but not less than P1,500.00
P1,000,001.00 & above	– 0.1% but not less than P2,000.00 and not more than P10,000.00

Bid documents can be obtained starting April 27, 2006 at the BAC Secretariat c/o Office of the City Mayor or Office of the City General Services, this city, Tel. No. (035) 402-3182, or 402-8115 anytime during office hours, and can also be inquired for further information or particulars.

The bidders shall drop their duly accomplished eligibility, technical and financial documents each in separate sealed envelopes duly marked as such in the bid box at the Conference Room at the Office of the City Mayor on **May 15, 2006 at 1:30 P.M.** at which place, date and time said envelopes shall be opened in the presence of the members of the BAC, the attending bidders, the observers, or their duly authorized representative. Late bids shall not be accepted.

The City Government of Bais reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at anytime prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

(Sgd.) CARMELINO L. MORALES
BAC Chairman

(PDI-April 21 & 27, 2006)

USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

PRISM
PRIVATE SECTOR MOBILIZATION FOR FAMILY PLANNING

The Private Sector Mobilization for Family Planning (PRISM), a project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under contract number 492-C-00-04-00036-00 and implemented by a consortium led by Chemonics International, Inc. is soliciting offers for:

DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PRISM's BEST IUD TRAINING SYSTEM AND CURRICULUM

Background

The PRISM Project supports USAID/Philippines' Strategic Objective 3, *desired family size and improved health sustainably achieved*, focusing on three components: 1) increased **workplace** support for family planning (FP) services and referrals, 2) establishment of viable, mass **market** brands of hormonal contraceptives, and 3) increased business value of FP among **private practice** providers.

Building the capacity of the service providers specifically the private midwives is one key strategy to achieve the goal of Component 3. As such, based on PRISM Second Annual Work Plan, Component 3 shall ***finalize at least nine (9) Business Enhancement Support and Training*** **(BEST)** ***courses for private providers*** according to the tiers as defined in the component revised strategy.

The objective of this procurement is to solicit responsive offers from qualified Philippine-based training institutions and non government organizations, consulting companies and other private sector institutions (hereafter referred to as "Offerors") for the development and implementation of PRISM's BEST IUD Training system and curriculum.

Qualification Requirements

- Must be a Philippine or US-based training institutions, consulting companies, foundations, or non-government organizations and other private sector institutions
- Must be in operation for the past 3 years and have relevant experience in family planning or reproductive health
- Must have a team of qualified personnel to manage and execute the project.
- Must have a positive net worth for 2004 or 2005 whichever is applicable

For a copy of the Request for Proposal, please get in touch with Mr. Roldan B. Ramos, Subcontracts Specialist at tel no. (02) 635-2397 local 226. Interested parties may also email: rramos@prism.org.ph to request a copy of the RFP.

The deadline for submission of proposals is on or **before 5:00 P.M, Wednesday, May 24, 2006**. Please see RFP for instructions on proposal submission.

Questions on RFP must be submitted not later than **May 17, 2006** by e-mail at rramos@prism.org.ph . PRISM will e-mail the clarifications on the RFP to all the bidders who have received a copy of the RFP. The PRISM project reserves the right to summarize answers and respond to only those questions that in its judgment represent material value in clarifying the RFP.

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF BUKIDNON
Provincial Capitol, Malaybalay City
Telephone No. 813-3353 & 221-3114 Telefax No. 813-2141
E-mail Address: buk_provl_bac@yahoo.com.ph

OFFICE OF THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR
Bids and Awards Committee

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Provincial Government of Bukidnon, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder contract:

Name of Contract	Proposed Construction of 68 Housing Units of Bukidnon Housing Project Phase IV
Location	Landing, Casisang, Malaybalay City
Contract Reference Number	300-06-0010
Approved Budget for the Contract	P 9,302,570.32
Contract Duration	225.00 Calendar Days

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

1. Advertisement	April 18, 2006 – May 2, 2006
2. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application for Eligibility Forms	May 9, 2006 until 9:00 A.M. only
3. Notice of Results of Eligibility Check	May 10, 2006
4. Issuance of Bid Documents	May 11, 2006
5. Pre-bid	May 16, 2006, 10:00 A.M.
6. Receipt and Opening of Bids	May 23, 2006, 10:00 A.M.

The BAC will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility Forms upon their submission of LOI, and upon their payment of a non-refundable amount at P 200.00 Eligibility Form to the Provincial Treasurer Office. Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC Secretariat Office, Capitol, Malaybalay City. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check by BAC Secretariat at the same address.

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents only to bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible for the Bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P2,500.00.

The Provincial Government of Bukidnon assumes no responsibility whasoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

Approved:

(Sgd.) JOSEFREDIE F. FLORES
Provincial Administrator
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - April 21 & 24, 2006)

NAGKAGULO! NAGPAKABIT NA! NOW NA!

SUPER BILIS KABIT

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48 hours kabitan, P500 installation fee
Unlimited P10 per call PLDT to PLDT NDD
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Landline+ MyDSL Tipid Combo. Save up to P600 a month

Nagkagulo ang buong Cebu! Nataranta ang mga Cebuano, aliw na aliw sila sa kasayahang dinala ng PLDT Super Friends. At syempre, sa Super Powers ng kanilang PLDT landline.

Marami ang mga tagahanga ng PLDT Super Friends sa harap ng Cebu Sports Plaza.

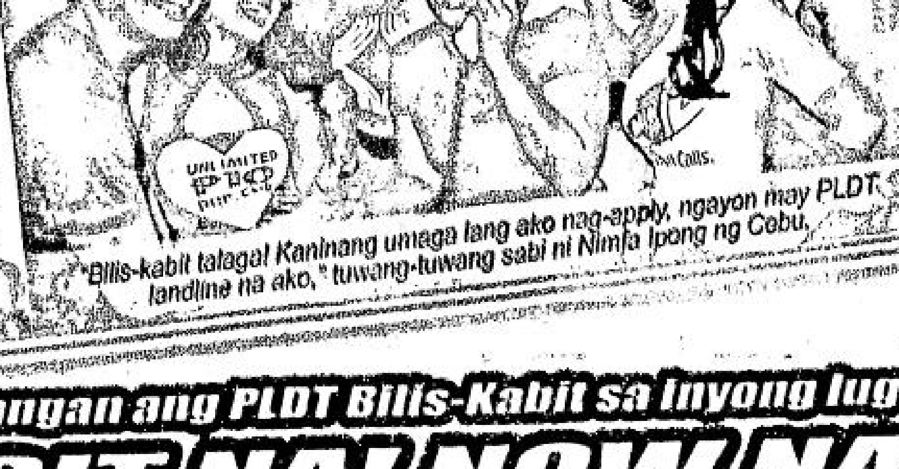
Apply dito, apply doon, picture dito, picture doon. Fiesta!

Hataw ang mga Super Friends. Pa-autograph pa ang mga naabutan na nag-a-apply sa mga PLDT Super Bilis Kabit Booth.

Hayan, apply na agad ang mga taga-Cebu para 48 hours lang may PLDT landline na sila na may Super Powers pa!

Super laki ng ngiti nila dahil may PLDT Landline agad sila. Tawag agad para laging masaya!

Akala ni Violy Avenido, lineman ang kumakatok laking gulat niya nang makita ang mga Super Friends. "Ang saya-saya!," sabi ni Violy.



"Bilis-kabit talaga! Kaninang umaga lang ako nag-apply, ngayon may PLDT landline na ako," tuwang-tuwang sabi ni Nimfa Ipong ng Cebu.

Abangan ang PLDT Bilis-Kabit sa inyong lugar!

MAGPAKABIT NA! NOW NA!

Aplus METRO

Editor Ester G. Dipasupil

Text us your feedback: Inquirer met name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart) E-mail: pr_metro@inquirer.com.ph

WHAT'S INSIDE

- 2 suspected car thieves nabbed after chase /A24
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UNIVERSAL ROBINA
CORPORATION
BAGONG ILOG, PASIG CITY

WATCHMEN found the bodies of Melchor Vergel de Dios and an unidentified companion inside a car parked near the Ever Gotesco mall in Quezon City early yesterday morning. RAFFY LERMA

Designer, pal found dead in car

Torture signs evident

By DJ Yap

THE BODIES OF A FASHION DEsigner and an unidentified companion were found inside a car parked near the Ever Gotesco Mall on Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City early yesterday morning.

Melchor Vergel de Dios, 36, and another man were discovered at 6:20 a.m. at the back portion of a silver Ford Lynx, according to police. The fashion designer, a first cousin of Angelito Vergel de Dios, executive director of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Traffic Operations Center, was found with his head wrapped in a white plastic bag. A cord was also tied around his neck. The other victim's hands and feet were bound by a leather-like material, police said.

The cause of death was not immediately clear, but police said De Dios had several wounds on the head and bruises all over the body. His companion also sustained bruises. De Dios was lying on his belly at the back seat, while the other man was slumped on the floor, according to a report by investigator PO2 Leo Nino Pasco.

The unidentified victim was in his early 30s, between 5'6" and 5'8" in height, sporting a flat top haircut, and wore a black shirt and short denim pants, Pasco said.

Left behind

The sports utility vehicle (plate number WNG-978), owned by De Dios, was parked at the outer lane, fronting a bank and furniture shop, before mall watchmen found the victims' bodies as they were making the rounds, Pasco said. Found at the scene were a bloodstained steel pipe, two kitchen knives and De Dios' identification card.

Quezon City police criminal investigation division chief Supt. Procopio Lipana said De Dios was last seen alive at 1:50 a.m. by his driver, whom he dropped off at Quezon Avenue. He had attended a seminar on labor issues with other fashion designers in Makati City that night, Lipana added.

The victim's brother and sister identified De Dios after police called the emergency numbers on his ID. Angelito described his cousin as "a quiet, soft-spoken man with no vices."

BIG SALE
AT ALL WILCON BRANCHES
March 21 – April 21, 2006

WILCON BUILDERS' DEPOT:

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Trunkline: 634-8387/ Tel: 634-8381 to 86 / Fax: 633-9331
Alabang 8003 Real St., Alabang Zapote Rd., Las Piñas City (across Toyota Alabang) Trunkline: 809-9106/ Tel: 809-7866, 809-9481, 772-0312 to 14
Fax: 772-0311, 772-0315
Balintawak 1274 EDSA, Balintawak, QC (before Dist. Limtuaco)
Trunkline: 362-8521/ Tel: 362-4531, 362-8268 to 83
Pasong Tamo 2212 Pasong Tamo, Makati City (beside Cityland Tower, in front of Don Bosco Chapel)
Tel: 893-3120, 893-3127, 893-3142, 893-3172 Fax: 893-3108
Quirino Lot 119 C1 Mindanao Ave., Brgy. Talipapa, QC.
Tel: 935-9653

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Tel: 926-1504, 921-3342
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Ortigas 225 EDSA, East Greenhills
Tel: 727-6064
Pasay EDSA, Pasay City
Tel: 832-0242
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Armed men nabbed after brief chase

Police suspect they are car thieves

By Luige A. del Puerto

TWO MEN THE POLICE WANTED TO question about a car without a Land Transportation Office (LTO) sticker got into more trouble when they yielded two handguns after leading the authorities on a short chase early yesterday in Quezon City.

The police raised the possibility that the men could be members of a notorious car theft syndicate.

Christian Lim and Nino Jotie, both residents of Quezon City, did not resist when cornered but denied involvement in any criminal activity, according to Chief Inspector Hansel Marantan, officer in charge of Task Force Limbas.

TF Limbas is the anti-car theft arm of the Philippine National Police-Traffic Management Group, the unit that got embroiled in a controversy last year after a television crew showed footage of its men shooting at three immobilized suspects in Pasig City.

"We never stopped building a case against this group," Marantan said, referring to the Valle Verde Gang, which the police said stole, sometimes by force, about 22 vehicles within just three months last year. Acting on a tip, the police scoured Katipunan Avenue in Quezon City around 1:30 a.m. Thursday in search of two men on board a white Suzuki Esteem with Plate No. WAV-950. The informant warned the police the men could be armed. The police spotted the car at White Plains subdivision an hour after midnight Thursday. The car had no LTO sticker, indicating it had not yet been registered.

"We flagged them down near the Shell station on Katipunan Avenue, but instead of stopping, they stepped on the gas," Marantan said. The two also ignored the red light twice—first at the corner of Santolan-Katipunan and then at the Santolan-Edsa intersection. They were finally cornered near the gate of Camp Crame, headquarters of the PNP.

Marantan said that while the men denied any involvement in car thefts, one of their phones revealed text messages showing they were linked to a son of a well-to-do family in Metro Manila who was earlier implicated in car theft.

More cases

The men also allegedly knew the three suspected car thieves killed in a shootout in Pasig City in November, according to Marantan.

Data from the TMG showed that car theft cases rose sharply in January this year compared to the same period last year.

A total of 193 cars were stolen, 35 of them forcibly, as of January 2006, compared to only 146 during the same month last year.

SUSPECTS Nino Jotie and Christian Lim on their way to police headquarters for questioning.

RAFFY LERMA

BF gates controversy heats up

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE FEUD BETWEEN THE PARAÑAQUE City government and the United BF Homeowners Association Inc. (UBFHAI) over BF Homes gates is hardly over.

Mayor Florencio Bernabe ordered on Wednesday city police chief Supt. Ronald Estilles to investigate alleged harassment by the UBFHAI of homeowners and motorists.

Nelson Lacambra, Bernabe's spokesperson, said several residents and motorists complained to the mayor that UBFHAI guards told them to buy car stickers from the association or they would be barred from the subdivision.

"Car stickers are sold at P150 to residents and P1,200 to outsiders," he told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Early this month, the Court of Appeals issued a writ of preliminary injunction returning to the UBFHAI control over the eight gates leading to the subdivision.

The injunction ordered the local government to suspend enforcement of Ordinance 00-15 until its validity was established.

The ordinance, passed in 2000, opened to the public subdivision roads linked to major city thoroughfares.

Alexander Villaraza, a non-resident, said in a letter to the mayor that UBFHAI guards stopped him twice—on El Grande and Elizalde Avenues—and told him to secure a car sticker by April 11 or he would not be able to enter the subdivision.

A resident, who did not want to be named, said guards stopped him twice two weeks ago at the gate and told him to renew his car sticker, even after he told the guards his sticker was still valid.

2-hour fire hits army buildings at Fort Bonifacio

SOLDIERS look for items that could still be used after a pre-dawn fire broke out at army headquarters yesterday.

REM ZAMORA

By Dona Pazzibugan

DOZENS OF FIREARMS WERE destroyed after a fire hit two buildings inside the Army headquarters in Fort Bonifacio before dawn yesterday.

Army officials were quick to rule out arson. A spokesperson said initial findings showed the two-hour blaze was caused by faulty electrical wiring.

The fire broke out at 3:15 a.m. at the 9th Ready Reserve Division headquarters building and then spread to the adjacent Regional Command Defense Group building, according to Army spokesperson Maj. Bartolome Bacarro. The fire was put out around 5 a.m. without any reported injuries.

An initial inventory indicated that at least 30 M14 and M16 rifles were destroyed inside an armory attached to the 9th Ready Reserve Division building while about 57 other firearms were salvaged from the fire, said Bacarro.

He said investigators are still determining how many firearms were destroyed at the adjacent building of the Regional Command Defense Group.

"We are ruling out sabotage. A security guard saw an electric spark at the 9th RR building before the fire. Initial investigation points to faulty electrical wiring," Bacarro said.

Meanwhile a fire also broke out in a public market on Real Street in Las Piñas City shortly after 3 a.m. Destroyed were two of the three buildings that made up the market.

The Aragon Building, a commercial complex was owned by Rodolfo Aragon, while Poblacion Market was owned by Esperanza Yu, said Deputy Fire Marshal Aldwin Salazar. City fire marshal Senior Insp. Robert Pacis said a short circuit in one of the stalls could have triggered the fire.

With a report by Jocelyn R. Uy

LTFRB warns operators vs unauthorized fare hikes

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE COUNTRY'S CHIEF PUBLIC TRANSport regulator has warned bus, jeepney and taxi operators and drivers against unilaterally hiking the fares they charge their passengers.

In a statement sent to the media, Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) chair Ma. Elena Bautista said her agency "will make sure no operator effects any fare increase without board approval."

Her comments come amid rising calls from driver and operators of public utility vehicles for another round of fare increases, after fuel prices resumed their upward trek in recent weeks.

No formal fare hike petitions have yet been filed after the latest round of fuel price increases, although regulators have already received reports that some jeepney and bus operators have begun raising their fares unilaterally.

"We appeal to operators and drivers to observe fares prescribed by LTFRB," Bautista said. "Any moves to ask for increase will have to be thoroughly studied and subjected to the usual public hearing." The LTFRB chair added that President Macapagal-Arroyo and Transportation and Communications Sec. Leandro Mendoza have ordered a crackdown on PUV operators which violate existing fare ceilings.

"Drivers and operators who overcharge must be reported to LTFRB hotline 0921-4487777 or DOTC hotline 7890," said Bautista.

Pasig chocolate factory closed

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

A CHOCOLATE FACTORY IN PASIG CITY was forcibly closed by the local government yesterday afternoon following complaints from its neighbors.

Security guards initially refused to let a small team inside the more than 50-year-old plant of the Universal Robina Corporation (URC) producing chocolates, wafers and biscuits in Barangay Bagong Ilog.

Officers from the City Legal Office and City Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) used an acetylene torch to cut a hole in the steel door and a steel ladder to climb up the main gate.

The closure order served by the team said, "The plant is ordered closed including all machinery and equipment, which are the sources of odor pollution until the respondent company has abated and controlled the odor."

CENRO's Raquel Naciongayo said about 200 families living around the plant complained about the annoying odor months ago.

Some complained of respiratory and skin disorders.

Naciongayo said the company failed to honor agreements reached during public hearings.

Emission tests

The closure order said results of emission tests "revealed that (the plant) failed the sulfur dioxide standard for clean air."

"We have been suffering for more than three years," said Renato de Guzman.

"The odor is really disgusting and they operate round the clock, even at midnight," he added.

De Guzman is a board member of the Kawilihan Homeowners Association that initiated the complaint.

The plant manufactures Nips Chocolates, Cream-O and Presto Cream, among others.

Naciongayo said the plant would remain closed until the company installed proper anti-pollution devices.

The raiding team, led by legal officer Carlos Abesamis, turned off the boiler that supplied the steam to power the equipment.

The boiler lacked proper anti-pollution devices to filter soot and other pollutants, Naciongayo said.

Job concerns

A 54-year-old factory worker expressed the concern of more than 500 plant employees about their jobs.

Following the closure, the management of URC faxed a statement to the INQUIRER yesterday. The latest test conducted last month by a DENR-accredited laboratory showed that the plant had passed all air emission standards, according to the statement.

It added: "Under the Clean Air Act, the sole authority to issue closure orders is vested in the Pollution Adjudication Board (PAB), which is chaired by the DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources) secretary."

No authority

"No local government has the authority to issue a closure order under this law," the statement said.

Whether or not the local government had the authority to close down a plant, the order in question had been issued "prematurely because all parties are still waiting for the results of the latest test conducted by the DENR itself. Based on the foregoing, URC believes the closure of its plant is unjustified and has no legal basis."

The URC management said it would ask Pasig officials to lift the order subject since it had no legal basis, and also "to protect the roughly 900 workers of the plant whose employment will be unduly affected."

METROBRIEFS

Trader shot dead in QC

A BUSINESSMAN was gunned down in broad daylight by unidentified men the other day in Quezon City. Eliseo Somera, 53, and his wife Nanette were on board a Suzuki multi-cab in front of North Olympus gate along Zabarte Road in Novaliches when four suspects suddenly appeared behind them, police said. Brandishing handguns, the men began shooting at the victim repeatedly, hitting him in different parts of the body, according to a report by investigator SPO1 Demosthenes Rebancos. Somera was rushed to the Bernardino Hospital, but he was declared dead on arrival. The suspects quickly left the scene by taking over a car being driven by Alexander Tanael, Rebancos said. The suspects abandoned their getaway vehicle when they reached Quirino Highway, police said.

DJ Yap

4 suspected bookies arrested

IN AN INTENSIFIED drive to stop the unauthorized betting on horse races, agents of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) arrested four suspects engaged in the illegal activity last Tuesday in Manila. The suspected bookies were identified as Rommel Arce, of Tramo Street, Putol, Kawit, Cavite; Roberto Cahilig Jr., of No. 1926 Anak Bayan St., Malate, Manila; and Janete Capundan, of No. 159 Singalong St., Malate, Manila. The NBI agents also arrested Fernando Perez, of No. 1132 P. Zapanta St., Malate, Manila, for allegedly participating in the illegal betting. "We are serious in conducting operations against this illegal betting because the government loses billions yearly in unpaid taxes," NBI Special Task Force chief Reynaldo Esmeralda said. The three male suspects were arrested at the corner of F. Munoz and P. Zapanta Streets in Malate while Capundan was nabbed in Ermita. The suspects face charges for violation of Republic Act 9287 or an act increasing the penalties for illegal number games, Esmeralda said. The NBI had arrested and charged 71 suspects, including gambling employees, bookies and bettors, earlier this month. Alleged gambling operators Venancio "Apeng" Sy and Ferdie Sy were also charged for reportedly masterminding and financing the booking operations. The Sys remain at large. Esmeralda said he has written officials of the Philippine Racing Commission (Philracom) to cancel the registration of Venancio's race horses.

Margaux C. Ortiz

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT G. RODRIGUEZ

Divine Mercy feast day

THE ARCHDIOCESAN Shrine of Nuestra Señora de Guia in Ermita, Manila will celebrate the feast of the Divine Mercy with a Holy Mass at 10 a.m., Sunday, April 23. Celebrant is Rev. Fr. Sanny de Claro, Shrine Rector. The nine-day novena in honor of the Divine Mercy, which started Friday, April 14, also ends on Sunday.

Book sale at Instituto Cervantes

BE PREPARED for a day of books and roses at Instituto Cervantes' Open House and Día del Libro FIESTA (International Book Day) celebration this Saturday, April 22. Following the tradition during the Day of the Book in Spain, a rose will be given as a gift to every book buyer. Starting at 10 a.m., visitors can tour the new Instituto Cervantes building along T.M. Kalaw St. in Manila, participate in the Poetry Reading Contest, watch free movie showings with the theme "Great Books on Screen," and view the exhibit entitled "The Filmed Don Quixote: Posters from Don Quijote movies." Instituto Cervantes will end Día del Libro FIESTA (International Book Day) with flamenco dances, lively music, a Latin band, and lots of Spanish food. For more information, call Instituto Cervantes at 5261482 or visit their website at http://manila.cervantes.es.

Ospital ng Maynila opens Monday

THE OSPITAL ng Maynila (OsMa) Medical Center will resume operations on Monday. The Manila government, which runs the hospital, made the announcement yesterday, saying the Manila Electric Co. has asked for more time to install a newly arrived electric transformer. "The hospital should have resumed operations today but the electric company has requested for an extension to optimize operations," city officials said. They added that patients will continue to be accommodated at other city-owned hospitals such as the Ospital ng Sampaloc Medical Center, Ospital ng Tondo in Abad Santos and Gat Andres Bonifacio in Del Pan. The hospital shut down on April 12 to give way to the rehabilitation and modernization of its main power supply.

Tina G. Santos

Japan, S. Korea race to avert possible clash over islets row

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA—JAPANESE AND South Korean negotiators raced to avert a clash over a set of disputed islets on Thursday as Seoul accused Tokyo of neocolonial ambitions and warned of a possible confrontation at sea.

Behind-the-scenes talks on a diplomatic solution came even as tensions mounted over a Japanese plan to survey resource-rich waters near the islands, which are occupied by South Korea but claimed by Japan.

Some 20 South Korean gunboats have been dispatched to the area in anticipation of the arrival of Japanese survey ships. The ships were scheduled to conduct high seas seizure drills Thursday, but delayed the exercises due to bad weather, said Jang Soo-pyo, a South Korean Coast Guard official.

In Seoul, foreign ministry spokesperson Choo Kyu-ho warned of the possibility of a clash and said Japan held the "key" to preventing conflict.

President Roh Moo-hyun meanwhile underscored the Korean protests by accusing Tokyo of harboring imperialistic ambitions. Many South Koreans consider Japan's claim a result of its 1910-45 colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula.

"There are some people claiming territorial rights to former colonies that were once acquired through a war of aggression," Roh said in a speech at a breakfast prayer meeting of Christian leaders in Seoul.

"We are now in a difficult situation," he said. "Problems cannot be solved just by goodwill, and we need wisdom and courage."

In Tokyo, Chief Cabinet Secretary Shinzo Abe said there had been "unofficial" contacts between the two sides, following media reports that Tokyo had offered to halt the survey if Seoul dropped efforts to add or change place names in the area.

Abe, however, said Japan planned to go ahead with the project.

"The Japanese coast guard is carrying out preparations to conduct a maritime survey that is based on international law," he said. "A calm response is necessary, and unofficial contacts between Japan and South Korea are taking place with the aim of a peaceful resolution."

Two survey ships left port on Japan's west coast on Wednesday but have been lingering offshore since, Coast Guard official Masayuki Fujita said. News reports said the survey may begin later Thursday.

The rocky outcroppings, called Dokdo by Koreans and Takeshima in Japan, are surrounded by rich fishing waters and both countries claim the area as part of their exclusive economic zones.

Korea Gas Corp. estimates the area has also enough methane hydrate deposits to meet South Korean natural gas demands for 30 years. It plans to start drilling in the region next year to assess the size of the deposits.

Foreign Minister Taro Aso told an upper house foreign and defense affairs committee Thursday that the survey is allowed under international laws and that Japan needs to do it to protect national interests. *AP*

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SOUTH Korean protesters shout slogans as they burn anti-Japanese banners at a rally in front of the Japanese Embassy in Seoul, April 20. The group assailed Japan's plan to send survey ships near the disputed islands, called Dokdo in Korean and Takeshima in Japanese. AFP

WORLDBRIEFS

Hu gears up for tough US talks

SEATTLE, Washington—Chinese President Hu Jintao is scheduled to travel to the US capital Washington Wednesday to hold tough talks with President George W. Bush and US officials on currency, trade, Iran, and human rights. The cautious and image-conscious leader carefully planned his first official US visit with by stopping in Seattle, Washington, a state that has booming trade and a surplus with China, to fend off expected criticism over its "unfair" trade practices and "undervalued" currency. Following a tour of the Microsoft campus in Redmond Tuesday, Hu said China will also "seriously keep its promise" to step up copyright protection, another thorny issue in US-China relations. *AFP*

First list of Gitmo detainees released

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—The US government released the most extensive list yet of the hundreds of detainees who have been held at the Guantanamo Bay prison—nearly all labeled enemy combatants, but only a handful of whom have faced formal charges. In all, 558 people were named in the list provided by the Pentagon on Wednesday in response to a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit by The Associated Press. They were among the first swept up for suspected links to al-Qaida or the ousted Taliban regime in Afghanistan. The list is the first official roster of Guantanamo detainees who passed through the Combatant Status Review Tribunal process in 2004 and 2005 to determine whether they should be deemed "enemy combatants." Those named are from Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia and 39 other countries. Many have been held at the US prison at Guantanamo Bay for more than four years. *AP*

Mumps epidemic spreads in US

IOWA CITY, Iowa—In the largest mumps outbreak in the United States in more than 20 years, almost 1,000 people have contacted the disease in the Midwest, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta announced Wednesday. The epidemic began in Iowa, where the State Department of Public Health has reported 815 suspected or confirmed cases. It has spread to at least seven other states. So far, no one has died from the disease, a flulike viral infection that causes swelling of the neck and chin and usually lasts five to 10 days. Because of effective vaccines, most people think of the mumps as a childhood illness that had been eradicated in the US. *NYT*

Thousands of Nepal protesters defy king, curfew

KATHMANDU—THOUSANDS OF prodemocracy protesters were converging Thursday on the Nepalese capital in defiance of shoot-on-sight curfew orders, AFP reporters said.

Waving party flags and chanting "Down with (King) Gyanendra, long live democracy", large crowds rallied at Gongabu on the northern rim of Kathmandu.

Demonstrators in their thousands were both inside and outside the curfew zone delineated by the city's ring road.

Women and children were among the peaceful protesters marshaled by party activists.

Security forces kept a close watch but did not intervene other than occasionally to chase away foreign reporters and photographers.

"We are ready to sacrifice our lives for democracy," said Sanyam Poudel.

"We are not scared of them," said the 22-year-old studying for a masters in English. "We gave many chances to the royal family, but the king has misunderstood us."

From the west side, thousands more prodemocracy activists also shouting anti-king slogans were marching towards Kalanki, a main entry point to the capital, witnesses said.

"People from Kirtipur town and other villages are converging on Kalanki," said Rajendra Manandhar, who was watching the crowds from a rooftop.

"I can see a sea of people covering the road over three kilometers distance," he said.

Manandhar added that a large number of soldiers and armed policemen were stationed at the Kalanki crossroads into the capital.

At Chabahil to the northeast, an AFP reporter estimated that some 10,000 people had gathered demanding the restoration of democracy.

Blowing whistles and chanting against the king, the demonstration was heading towards the curfew area, also under the eyes of armed policemen.

Shoot-on-sight orders have been issued inside Kathmandu where the curfew was strictly enforced by a large security presence.

Despite the clampdown political parties have insisted mass demonstrations would go ahead, kicking off a third week of mass protests against the king.

The curfew was declared after witnesses said four protesters were shot dead and many more wounded during violent clashes Wednesday in eastern Nepal, the worst violence of the campaign to end Gyanendra's absolute rule.

The defense ministry issued a statement saying only two people died.

The curfew limit extends 200 m beyond the ring road around the capital. *AFP*.

KING Gyanendra of Nepal AFP

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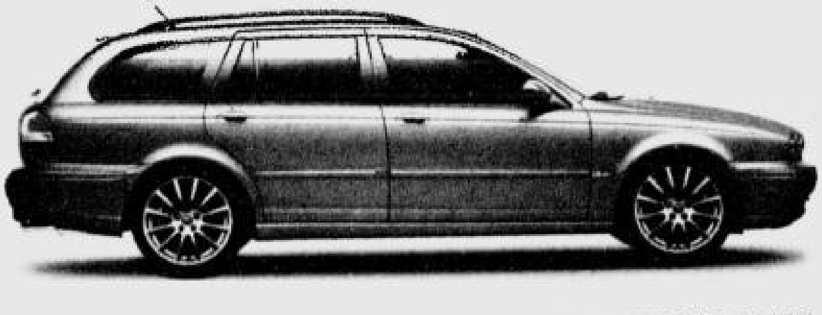

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Italy court says Prodi won

ROME—ITALY'S HIGHEST COURT UPHELD ON WEDNESDAY THE narrow victory of Romano Prodi in last week's elections, apparently ending Silvio Berlusconi's tenure as prime minister after five years—except that the mercurial Berlusconi still would not concede defeat.

Instead, there were strong signs that he was possibly opening a new campaign: To be named the nation's president, or at least have a strong say in the choice.

As of late Wednesday, hours after the high court, the Court of Cassazione, released its final count of last week's bitterly contested vote, Berlusconi had made no public comment. But several allies suggested that the court's decision was not adequate, and the nation's political tensions tightened by a few notches.

"We acknowledge the decision," Sandro Bondi, national coordinator for Berlusconi's Forza Italia Party, said in a statement. But, Bondi said, "the reservations we advanced continue to stand."

Earlier in the day, Bondi floated a proposal that some political experts believe is the real force behind Berlusconi's reluctance to acknowledge the results. He suggested that Berlusconi be made the president of Italy—a position appointed by Parliament that would keep him in politics, give him great prestige and protect him from any attack by a new government on his vast holdings in media, publishing and sports.

Berlusconi's stance seemed in character for a risk taker who built Italy's largest fortune and who has often been accused of ignoring the rules along the way. But it is unclear whether his continuing resistance to judicially certified election results will be seen as an admirable fighting spirit or a dangerous toying with Italian democracy. *NYT*

PRODI AP

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Rove's role diminished in revamp

WASHINGTON—THE OVERHAUL OF THE White House staff intensified on Wednesday as Karl Rove, one of the president's most powerful and feared advisers, gave up day-to-day control over the administration's domestic policy to concentrate on the midterm elections and Scott McClellan, the White House press secretary, said he would step down.

ROVE REUTERS

The departure of McClellan gives President Bush a chance to put a new public face on the White House at a time when it is beset by problems. But Rove's changed status is the more telling sign of the extent of the shakeup directed by Bush and his new chief of staff, Joshua B. Bolten.

Rove has been at Bush's side since Bush entered politics, and for years his influence has been unquestioned. The decision to take away his daily control over the White House's policy-making apparatus is the first time his role has been diminished, and is a stark reversal from the heady aftermath of Bush's 2004 reelection victory, when Rove's portfolio was expanded to give him formal control over policy.

Rove will retain his title as a deputy chief of staff, as well as his catch-all designation as Bush's senior adviser. Joel D. Kaplan, now the deputy White House budget director, will assume Rove's duties as the manager of policy development at the White House and will take the title deputy chief of staff for policy.

The change in Rove's responsibilities was at a minimum a signal that the White House is serious about reorganizing itself to get Bush's presidency back on track, and was widely interpreted in Washington as a step down in stature for Rove and an acknowledgement of policy failures in the last year. Rove had taken the lead on what was supposed to be the main domestic policy initiative of the second Bush term, the president's proposal to remake the Social Security system. The effort to sell the plan to a skeptical Congress and voters flopped. *NYT*

UN: Refugee system eroded by intolerance

LONDON—INTOLERANCE, TERRORISM fears and tighter asylum controls were undermining the international system for dealing with refugees, the UN high commissioner for refugees said Wednesday.

At 9.2 million people, the number of refugees was at its lowest level for 25 years, but this was tempered by a swell in the number of internally displaced people—refugees within their home country—to 25 million.

There was widespread confusion over migrants and refugees and the world was falling short of meeting internally displaced people's needs, high commissioner Antonio Guterres said.

"One of the main problems we face in order to safeguard asylum seekers is a growing intolerance, happening everywhere," said the former Portuguese prime minister.

"We are witnessing the rebirth of irrationality," he said, citing xenophobia.

"This is creating a difficult environment in which the foreigner is sometimes hated and feared."

Guterres was launching the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees's (UNHCR) new assessment, "The State of the World's Refugees: Human Displacement in the New Millennium."

The book, which tackles how the changing dynamics of displacement over the past five years have affected the international asylum regime, said the refugee system had reached a critical juncture.

The drop in refugee numbers was mostly due to the end of several conflicts and a few large-scale repatriations, notably four million people returning to Afghanistan, and others to Angola and Sierra Leone. *AFP*

SPORTS

E-mail: pr_sports@inquirer.com.ph

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Sparks edge Tortillos; Hapee wins

By Jasmine W. Payo

BOYET BAUTISTA CAUGHT FIRE DOWN THE stretch as the Toyota Sparks slipped past Granny Goose Tortillos, 68-67, in the PBL Unity Cup yesterday at the Olivarez College Sports Center in Parañaque.

Bautista unloaded eight of his 13 points in the final two minutes, including the winning layup in the last 7.1 seconds, as the Sparks claimed solo second with a 5-2 record.

The Sparks spoiled the huge effort of Tortillos center JR Quiñahan, who finished with a game-high 28 markers and 11 rebounds.

Earlier, Jason Castro continued his strong play to power Hapee-PCU to a 68-63 victory over the TeleTech Titans.

Castro shot 11 of his 19 points in the final quarter as the Teethmasters improved to 3-4.

TeleTech took its fourth straight loss.

GAMES TOMORROW
(Olivarez College Sports Center)
2 p.m.—Harbour Centre vs Montaña
4 p.m.—Magnolia vs Rain or Shine

MARK Moreno of Hapee beats Teletech's T.Y. Tang to the ball in their PBL game yesterday.
ERIK ARAZAS

The scores:

First Game

HAPEE-PCU 68—Castro 19, Solis 10, Espinas 8, Sanz 7, Moreno 7, Belga 7, Bacuil 6, Guevarra 4, Nallon 0, Bucao 0, Gonzales 0, Razon 0.

TELETECH 63—Dundi 16, Mercado 8, Sierra 7, Capus 7, Latoreno 7, Doruelo 5, Mendoza 5, Tang 5, Gelig 2, Estrada 1, Villamin 0, Magdadaro 0.

Quarters: 15-20, 27-30, 43-40, 68-63

Second Game

TOYOTA OTIS 68—Devance 15, Bautista 13, Aban 12, Aldave 10, Larong 5, Orela 4, Daa 4, Casio 3, Andaya 2, Coronel 0, Cabahug 0.

GRANNY GOOSE 67—Quiñahan 28, Ibañes 11, Latonio 10, Santos 5, Cruz 5, Grijaldo 4, Dela Peña 2, Alfad 2, Concha 0, Ferrer 0, Bravo 0, David 0 Gavino 0, Saldua 0.

Quarters: 14-18, 34-29, 49-51, 68-67

Open on despite PSC policy—GTK

DESPITE THE "NO LIQUIDATION, no financial support" policy, the Philippine Track and Field Association is pushing through with its national open set May 4-7 at the Rizal Memorial track oval.

Patafa president Go Teng Kok yesterday said cancellation is not an option, adding that he intends to fully liquidate the P1.4 million earlier released by the Philippine Sports Commission.

"I can't cancel it, there are too many foreign countries that confirmed," said Go, who has requested the PSC for the same P1.4 million to hold the association's centerpiece event.

"It (the request) is not completely denied," said Go. "They said that if we can come up with the liquidation, they will give their support."

Aside from serving as selection process for Filipino Asian Games prospects, there are about 100 athletes coming from Korea, China, Malaysia among others, said Go.

"If they are able to liquidate all of their accounts, their request will be tackled again in the next board meeting," said PSC executive director Guillermo Iroy in a separate interview.

The Philippine Olympic Committee had earlier approved the PSC decision to withhold financial support to national sports associations that have outstanding unliquidated funds with the agency.

POC president Peping Cojuangco said the PSC is justified in enforcing its "no liquidation, no financial support" policy .

"We have to understand the position of the PSC that they are answerable to the Congress and the Commission on Audit on where their budget is going," said Cojuangco in a radio interview.

Cojuangco, who heads the Philippine Equestrian Federation, said NSAs must understand the PSC policy especially after the national associations' total unliquidated amount reached as high as P88 million last February.

Go said he remained confident that he can complete his obligations with the agency by Wednesday.

Marc Anthony Reyes

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TNT guns for 3rd straight win vs SLR

TALK 'N TEXT IS REAPING THE FRUITS OF embracing the defense-oriented style of coach Derrick Pumaren.

STANDINGS	W	L
San Miguel	8	2
Coca-Cola	6	3
Purefoods	6	3
Talk 'N Text	4	4
Ginebra	4	4
Alaska	4	5
Red Bull	3	6
Air21	3	7
Sta. Lucia	2	6

GAMES TODAY
(Araneta Coliseum)
4:40 p.m. — Sta.Lucia vs Talk 'N Text
7:35 p.m. — Barangay Ginebra vs Red Bull

No longer struggling, the Phone Pals shoot for a third straight win in the Gran Matador-PBA Philippine Cup today when they clash with struggling Sta. Lucia at the Araneta Coliseum.

After claiming the scalps of Red Bull and Air21, Pumaren is convinced that the Phone Pals are now getting into the groove with the foundations that he laid down prior to the tournament.

"They (Phone Pals) are getting there. They are now rotating well and they know the roles they have to play," said Pumaren, who took over from Joel Banal before the start of the tournament. "Now, its just a matter of fine-tuning."

The Phone Pals go into the 4:40 p.m. match running fourth with their 4-4 record along with the Barangay Ginebra Kings while the Realtors are mired at the cellar with only two wins to show in eight games.

The defending champion Kings collide with Red Bull in the other game scheduled at 7:35 p.m. with Ginebra hoping to recover from a 103-94 beating it took from San Miguel and the Bulls seeking to arrest a four-game skid.

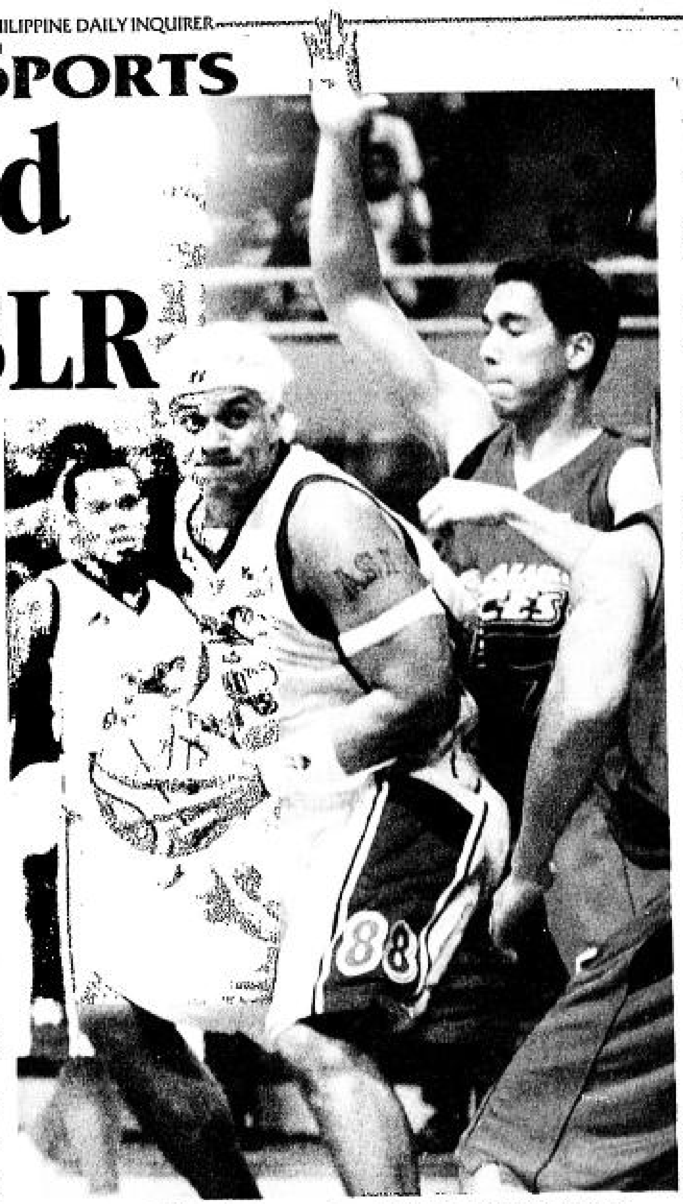
Not only are the Bulls losing games at an alarming rate, Yeng Guiao's charges dropped their fourth straight game after blowing a nine-point advantage down the stretch against Alaska last Easter Sunday.

While they are playing great defense, the Pals still have to maintain their consistent offensive if they want to win more games.

"That is something we all have to see," said Pumaren, moments after a 103-88 rout of the Air21 Express on Easter Sunday, their second straight after a conquest of Red Bull the week before.

In their last outing, the Realtors narrowly dropped a 104-108 overtime decision to the Coca-Cola Tigers with Dennis Espino and Kenneth Duremdes on the injury list. The two superstars will return to action today.

June Navarro


ERIK ARAZAS

ASI Taulava will be a force to reckon with for Talk 'N Text tonight.

Enduro SML series starts in Cebu City

GEAR UP AND GET READY AS ENDURO SAN Mig Light Adventures Series 2006 goes nationwide.

The Enduro SML Series, the adventure race, which for years has tested the racers' endurance and stamina, is here anew with bigger challenges.

This year, the Enduro SML Adventure Race is set to conquer not only Luzon but also Visayas and Mindanao.

The first leg of the race unfurls on May 27 in Cebu City, while the second leg will be in Davao City on June 10. The grand finale will be in Metro Manila on July 7 to 8.

With more than P100,000 at stake, this race brings together hardcore athletes, yuppies, students, weekend warriors and even the media and celebrities to vie for the Enduro SML Adventures title.

But unlike in the previous Enduro races, the first two legs of the race will only have the novice category, a 4-6 hour quest.

The Manila leg, on the other hand, has the novice and elite categories.

The elite category, which is suited for hardcore and professional adventure racers, is a day-long race that dishes out more arduous and grueling tasks and challenges that will test the skills, stamina and determination of the participants.

More than 100 teams are expected to compete in this annual race being held for the third time. This event is presented by San Mig Light, the right alcohol less filling beer.

This time, racing enthusiasts from Mindanao will have a chance to strut their stuff in the event that defies all limits.

The Enduro SML Series delivers intense action as each racer comes face-to-face with unexpected trials and hardships along the race.

Call the Enduro hotline at (632)414-1489 or log on to www.sanmiglight.com.ph for details.

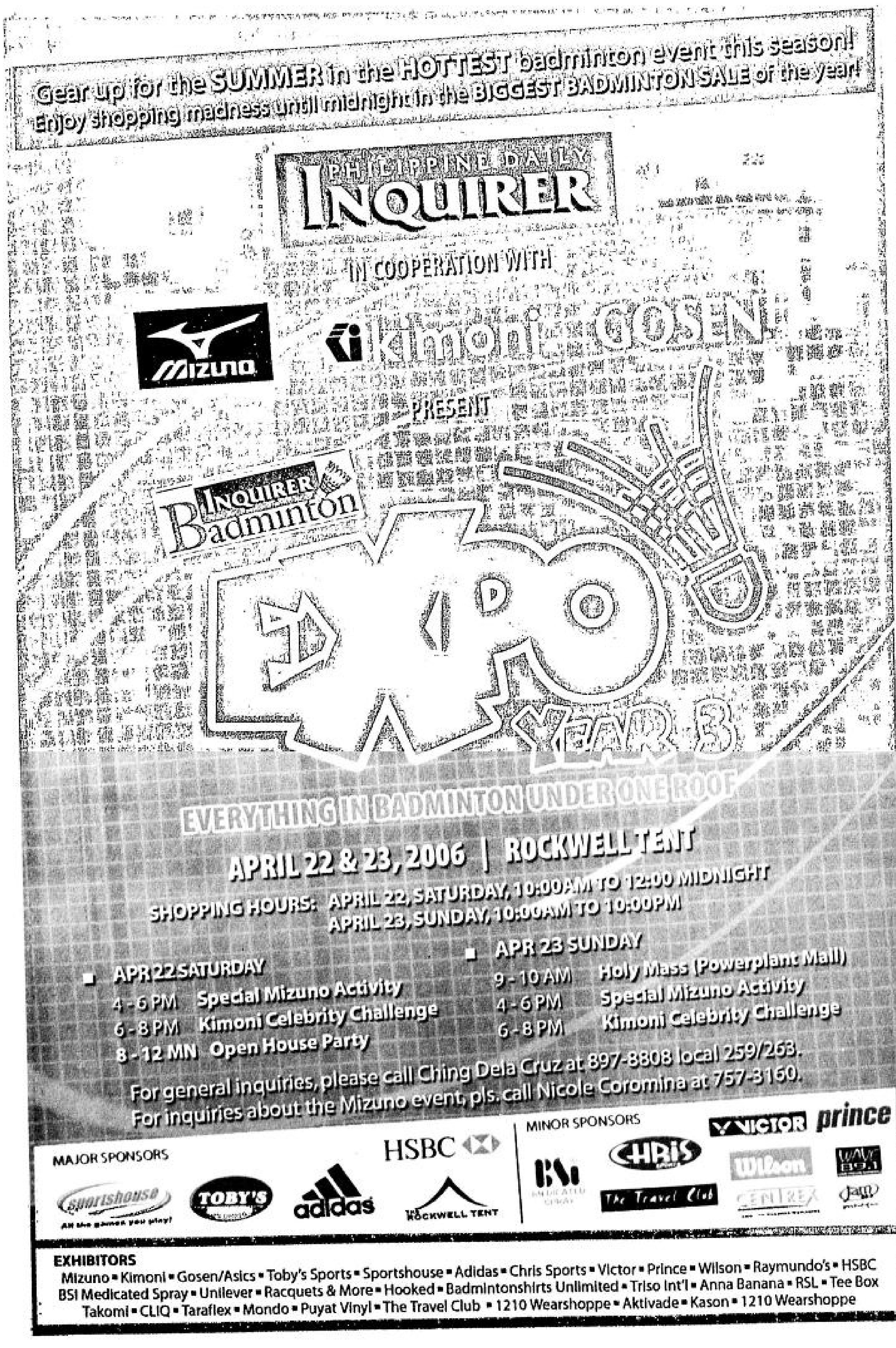
Mindanao off-road invitational gets going today

THE SECOND LEG OF THE MINdanao Off-road Series comes alive today up to Sunday in Mangima, Manolo Fortich, Bukidnon, with the 'Maximum Underdrive 5 Off-road Invitational.'

The event will pit the country's best 4x4 specialists against a computerized clock on a racetrack that is 100 percent made by nature. Deep water crossings, rocks and boulders, mud and steep slopes are just some of the challenges that await the competitors.

The event is organized by the 4x4 Fun Club and supported by Motormall Davao Corp., Sarman CPRI-Supercool, 4AC Watchers Marketing, Hankook Performance Tires, Parasat Cable TV, Footprints Award Centrum, Roadstone Tires, Gordiel Auto Parts, Petron Rev-X, Sandy 101.5FM and Misamis Oriental Gov. Oscar Moreno.

Although some of the entries are veterans of last year's event, organizers say that this year's course will provide bigger challenges and only the best will come out on top.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- APR 22 SATURDAY
  4 - 6 PM Special Mizuno Activity
  6 - 8 PM Kimoni Celebrity Challenge
  8 - 12 MN Open House Party
- APR 23 SUNDAY
  9 - 10 AM Holy Mass (Powerplant Mall)
  4 - 6 PM Special Mizuno Activity
  6 - 8 PM Kimoni Celebrity Challenge

For general inquiries, please call Ching Dela Cruz at 897-8808 local 259/263.
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Hiso-Token Cycling kicks off tomorrow

THE 1ST HISO-TOKEN CYCLING Cup kicks off at the Golden Valley Commercial Center in Malanday, Marikina City, at 7 a.m. tomorrow.

The country's top cyclists, Victor Espiritu and Lloyd Reynante, have confirmed their participation in this criterion race.

Event organizer Rolly P. Hiso of RP Hiso Sports Management said this one-day cycling spectacle is open to all cyclists, including non-Marikina residents.

The event is managed by Marikina Cycling Club headed by its chair and president Wilbur Dee, vice president Berting Rosales and officers Zaldy Cornelio, Larry Funelas, Pol Cortiguerra, Boyet Torres, Adamson Alarcon, Bert Roxas, Leo Rejano, Ruel Tan, Reynaldo de Dios, Enrique Cruz and Barangay Concepcion chair Rudy Francisco.

The race is co-sponsored by GVCC owner Vicente Santos.

"It's nice to see young riders to develop their skills in competitions like this,' said the Chicago-based Hiso, team manager of the Philippine Cycling Team during 1991 Manila Southeast Asian Games.

SPORTSWATCH

San Miguel backs drag racing

SAN MIGUEL CORP. GAVE ITS SUPPORT TO THE BATANGAS RACING CIRcuit for the launching of a new drag racing event for bikes dubbed as the Ginebra San Miguel Underbone Invitational Drag Race tomorrow at the BRC Drag Strip in Rosario, Batangas. Cash prizes and trophies await the winners of this event sponsored by Ginebra San Miguel and supported by Pilipinas Shell, Denso, Casino Filipino, Arai, Shoei and KPM Helmets. Contact Kilton Motors Office c/o BRC operations manager Rodini Rivera or Nelson Gayola at (632) 817-2241, 729-5365 or fax 815-1241 for details.

YMCA Makati sports clinics up

YMCA MAKATI IS STILL ACCEPTING ENROLLEES FOR ITS SPORTS clinics at No. 7 Sacred Heart St., San Antonio Village, Makati City. Swimming schedule: batch 2 (April 17-28), batch 3 (May 1-12) and batch 4 (May 15-26); basketball: batch 2 (April 17-28), batch 3 (May 1-12), batch 4 (May 15-26); tennis: batch 2 (May 1-12), batch 3 (May 15-26); aikido: (April 17-May 26); muay thai/kickboxing (April 17-May 26). For inquiries, call 899-6380 to 82, 899-6101 to 03, 899-8255.

Summer Salpukan offers P4.4M prize

WITH MORE THAN 300 CONFIRMED ENTRIES, THE SUMMER SALPUKAN 6-Cock Derby backed by B-Meg Derby Ace starts on Wednesday at the Makati Coliseum. The seven-day tilt (April 26, 29, May 2, 4, 6, 11 and 13) offers a prize of P4.4 million, broken down as follows: P3 million cash, two Toyota cars and two motorcycles. Entry fee is P11,000 according to promoters Lito Orillaza, Rudy Salud and William Co of WTJ Sports and Amusement Corp. Call 896 -3545 and 895 -6475 (Joan or Stephanie).

70 fights in Pasay derby today

AFICIONADOS CAN EXPECT MORE THAN 70 QUALITY FIGHTS TODAY AS big-time cockers collide in Pasay City Cockpit's BJ Engkwentro 4-cock derby to be sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. Boy Javier, a leading Metro Manila cocker affiliated with the Pasay Cockpit Cockers Association (PCCA) and Pinoy Cockers Association of the Philippines (PCAP), will host the derby. For an entry fee of P10,000, a cash prize of P300,000 awaits the winners. For details, call 843-1890, 843-1746 and 816-6750.

Big-time 5-cocker set at SJC

PROMINENT COCKERS AND BREEDERS OF METRO MANILA AND NEARBY provinces have signed up for the 5-cock derby at San Juan Coliseum on April 26. It is supported by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. "We are expecting more than 100 fights on Wednesday, that's why the derby will start at 2 p.m," said SJC pit manager Pete Rivera. Derby host J. Paneda said guaranteed prize is P700,000. Contact 725-6563; 725-5369 and 0917 -8041691 (Ariel).

RACING TIPS

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Qrt/Tri)—Gold Ruler (1), Thereshope (6), Solesa (7), Pentagon (2)
Race 2—(Porta/Qrt/Tri)—Blitzkrieg (4), Red Storm (6), Top Most (3), Batang Kalookan (7), Friendly Fire (1)
Race 3—(Qrt/Tri)—Kalmia (7), Oui Paris (1), Don't Tell Ella (3), Luv Almighty (6)
Race 4—(Porta/Qrt/Tri)—Rivendel (6), Solitude (3), Thor Simba (1), Triple Twist (4), Red Diamond (2)
Race 5—(Qrt/Tri)—Jokes Only (3), Red Hot WaterFair Undup (5), Latin Music (2), Look Who's Playing (1)
Race 6—(Porta/Qrt/Tri)—Ocean Cookie (11), Tell Henry (7), Western Legend (10), Remus (4), Reporter (3)
Race 7—(Qrt/Tri)—War Alert (3), Zubaida (1), Ahoy My Boy (8), Surprise Target (7)
Race 8—(Porta/Qrt/Tri)—Dead Dash/The Dominator (4), Chabacana (8), Carmelita (10), King Yoji (2), Simply Gold (1)
Race 9—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Danielle's Angel (5), Patutina (9), Royal Bet (3), Raging River (8), Epic Energy (7), Gentleman's Lady (6)

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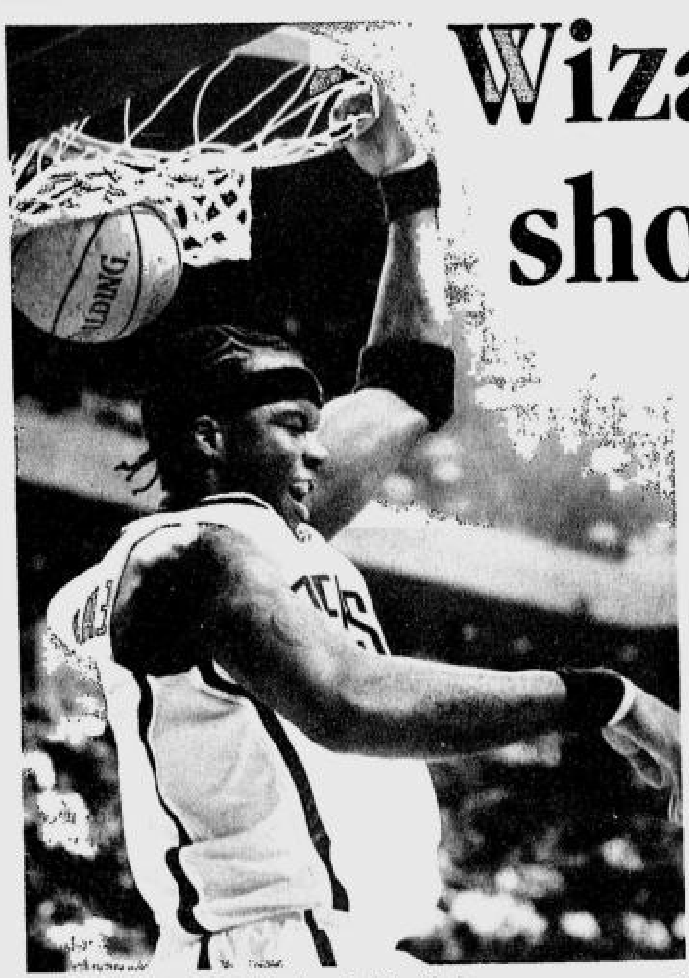


PACERS' Jermaine O'Neal dunks against the Magic. AP

Wizards book playoff showdown with Cavs

LOS ANGELES—THE LAST PIECES OF THE NATIONAL BASKETBALL Association playoff puzzle finally fell into place Wednesday as the regular season concluded.

The Eastern Conference's fifth through eighth seeds were still to be decided heading into the final day of action, and the Washington Wizards seized the No. 5 spot with a 96-80 victory over the top-seeded Detroit Pistons.

Caron Butler had 33 points and 12 rebounds as the Wizards booked a first-round clash with Cleveland and LeBron James.

The Cavaliers, who rested James and Larry Hughes, escaped with a 100-99 victory over Atlanta.

They took their record to 50-32, the fourth time in club history the Cavaliers have posted 50 wins and the first since the 1992-93 campaign.

Butler didn't seem to mind that the Pistons treated the game like an exhibition.

Detroit, who finished the season with a 64-18 record and set a franchise record for wins in the regular season, will face Milwaukee in the first round.

The Indiana Pacers clinched the sixth seed in the East with an 89-83 victory over Orlando.

Jermaine O'Neal had 24 points, Stephen Jackson added 22 points and Peja Stojakovic 17 for the Pacers, who won five of their final six games and will face New Jersey in the playoffs.

The Chicago Bulls earned the seventh seed with Ben Gordon scoring 24 points in the Bulls' 127-106 rout of Toronto.

Luol Deng added 21 points, Kirk Hinrich 17 and 10 assists and Andres Nocioni 14 and 11 rebounds for Chicago, who closed the regular season by winning six straight and 10 of their last 11 games.

They'll face the second-seeded Miami Heat in the first round.

In the West, San Antonio's decision to rest Tim Duncan and Tony Parker didn't stop the top-seeded Spurs from closing the season with an 89-87 victory over Houston.

The Spurs finished the season with a 63-19 record and will face Sacramento in the first round.

The Los Angeles Lakers secured the seventh seed ahead of Sacramento with a convincing 115-95 victory over New Orleans.

Kobe Bryant scored 27 of his 35 points in the first half as the Lakers booked a first-round clash with the Phoenix Suns.

Bryant, making one more claim to Most Valuable Player honors, compiled his latest dominant performance, making 13-of-26 shots en route to finishing the campaign with a league-best 35.4 scoring average. *AFP*

Complete Results: Cleveland 100, Atlanta 99; Indiana 89, Orlando 83; Boston 84, Miami 78; NY Knicks 90, New Jersey 83; Charlotte 94, Philadelphia 86; Washington 96, Detroit 80; Memphis 102, Minnesota 92 (OT); San Antonio 89, Houston 87; LA Clippers 85, Dallas 71.

ALLEN

Allen rips 3-pt mark

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON—RAY Allen broke the National Basketball Association's single-season record for 3-pointers as he led the SuperSonics to a 109-98 win over Denver on the final day of the regular season on Wednesday.

Allen scored 27 points and made 7-of-13 from the arc to finish the 2005-06 campaign with 269 3-pointers, breaking the mark set by Dennis Scott in 1995-1996.

He raised his career total to 1,755, second on the all-time list behind Reggie Miller.

Allen sank five 3-pointers in the first quarter and scored 20 points in the opening half. *AFP*

Mowelfund Celebrity Inv'l golf set June 23

TO BENEFIT MARGINALIZED workers in the film industry, golfing celebrities see action on June 23 to raise funds for the Movie Workers Welfare Foundation (Mowelfund) at the short Club Intramuros layout in Manila.

This marks the first time that Mowelfund, put up by former President and actor Joseph Estrada in 1974, will be organizing a golf tournament, dubbed the "Celebrity Golf Cup Invitational."

The most prominent names in entertainment, politics, sports and media have been invited as the Mowelfund aims to raise a significant amount of money to help in sustaining the privileges and benefits of its more than 4,500 members.

Former Senator Tito Sotto and actress Boots Anson-Roa head the organizing committee of the event which was launched yesterday.

The tournament, which will use the modified stableford format of scoring, is expected to be graced by such screen and television luminaries like Vic Sotto, Richard Gomez, Aga Muhlach and Ogie Alcasid, among others.

Sotto and Roa have invited former president Fidel V. Ramos to hit the ceremonial tee shot, with Philippine Tourism Authority general manager Robert Dean Barbers also invited to play.

The Mowelfund has been working on a tight budget since 2002, when its share of amusement tax charges in the Metro Manila Film Festival was cut to 30 percent from 50.

Not only do the members enjoy medical and hospitalization benefits amounting to P77,000 each per year, Mowelfund also provides aid for the education needs of the children of its members.

For inquiries, call 727-1915, 727-1961 and 936-3879 c/o Tere, Jacqui and May.

Federer, Nadal near title clash

MONTE CARLO—WORLD NUMber one Roger Federer and defending champion Rafael Nadal edged closer to another title showdown when they stormed into the Monte Carlo Masters third round on Wednesday.

Top seed Federer led a sweep of the top four seeds into the next phase with a 46-minute, 6-0, 6-1 demolition job of hapless Spaniard Alberto Martin.

Federer, building up to another assault on the French Open title—the only Grand Slam crown to have eluded him—allowed Martin just 18 points in their one-sided encounter.

The Swiss star now faces world number 352 Benjamin Balleret of Monaco on Thursday.

The unknown 23-year-old advanced as French 13th seed Sebastien Grosjean was forced to quit with a back injury trailing 4-6, 7-5, 3-2.

Federer marvelled at how he was able to turn his clay fortunes after struggling in the first round here.

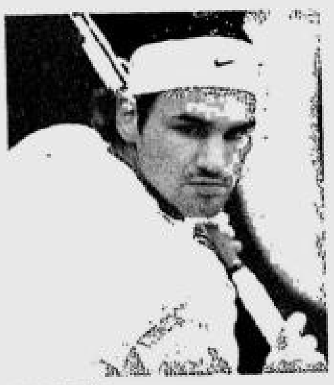
"This was really unexpected," said Federer whose season now stands at 30-1.

"I didn't play well in the first round. To play so different two days later, it's quite, incredible." Federer had to wait for several hours to take the court as sixth seed Guillermo Coria battled back from the brink against Frenchman Paul-Henri Mathieu 1-6, 7-6 (8/6), 6-4 victory.

"In the locker room I was getting impatient to get on the court, I had to warm up several times. I was really getting sort of ready to play and it never really happened.

"Once I got out there, I played very free, I played very good. I'm very happy the way I played, and everything worked out how I wanted.

"I couldn't have played any better." Spain's second-seed Rafael Nadal beat approaching showers as he put out Monaco's other entry, Jean-Rene Lisnard, 6-4, 6-1.



FEDERER

NADAL

The reigning Roland Garros champion claimed his 38th consecutive victory on clay and now stands just one match behind Thomas Muster and Ilie Nastase, who are tied for fourth on the all-time list.

Nadal, last beaten on the dirt in April, 2005, improved to 10-1 in the principality.

Third seed David Nalbandian complained about a 10:00 start, but calmed down with a 7-5, 7-5 win over Italian Andreas Seppi.

Croatian Ivan Ljubicic, the fourth seed, beat Frenchman Florent Serra, 4-6, 6-3, 7-5 while Spain's David Ferrer, German Nicolas Kiefer, and former champion Juan Carlos Ferrero all went through.

But Sicilian Alessio Di Mauro knocked out tenth seed Radek Stepanek 6-2, 2-6, 7-6 (7/4).

Mathieu had all the chances against Coria, but couldn't convert a 6-1, 4-0 lead into a win. He saved six match points—but stumbled on four of his own before going down.

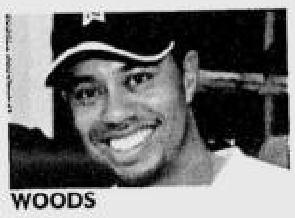
"It was a good fight but I'm furious at myself," said Mathieu. *AFP*

Tiger tries his driving mettle in stock racing

AUCKLAND—THE FANS OF golf superstar Tiger Woods know he can drive long but now they are going to find out if he can also drive fast.

The world No. 1 will try stock car racing in the New Zealand town of Huntly, south of Auckland, on Monday at the bequest of his caddy and part-time car racer Steve Williams.

"I've done other things—I've thrown a baseball a few times and thrown a couple of coins here and there," Woods told journalists in Auckland Thursday.



WOODS

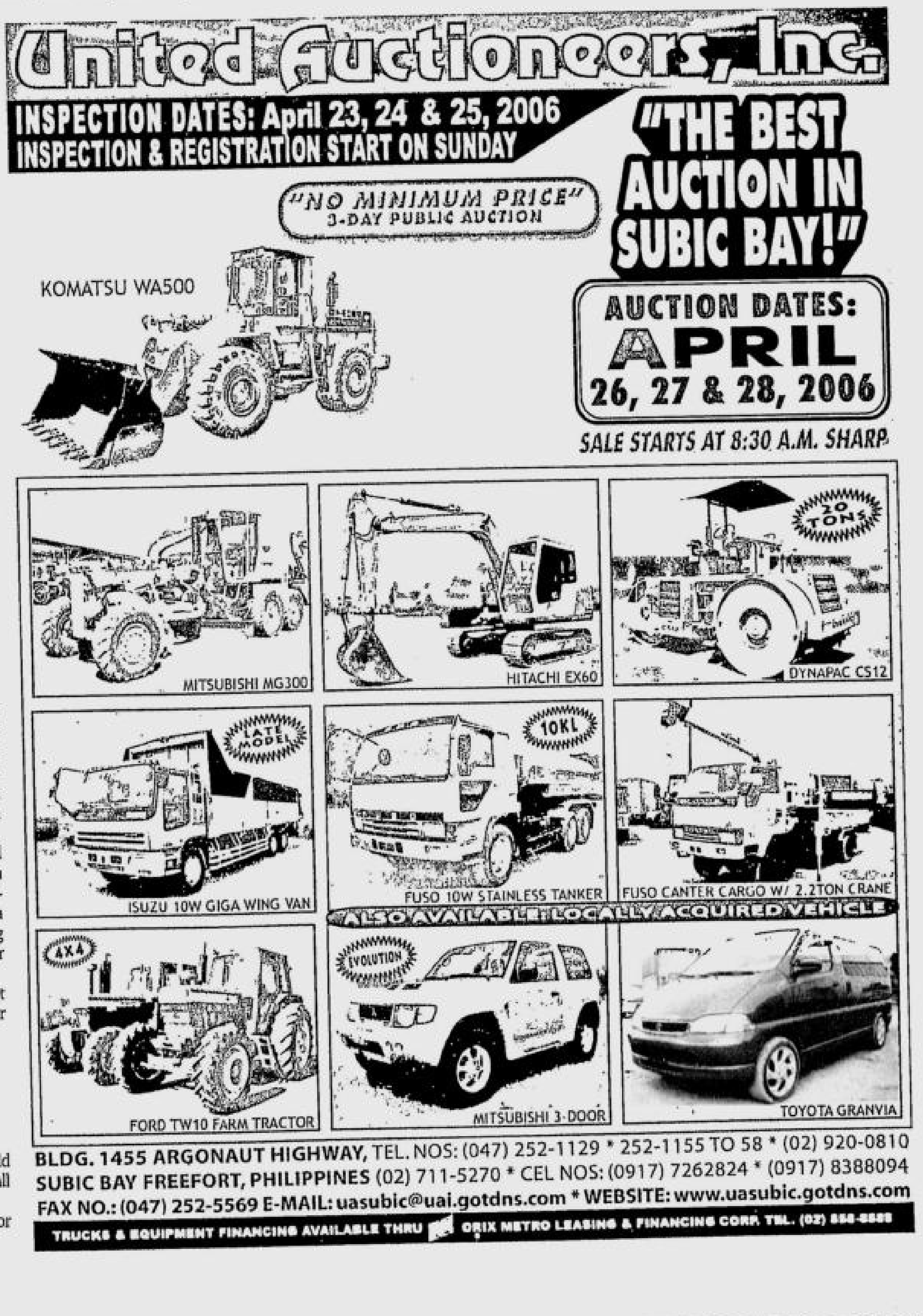
"This is a bit more physical." Stock car racing in New Zealand involves short races between old cars, with a lot of shoving and crashing between contestants, but Woods was not put off.

"If they knock me off, I can knock them off," he said. "The whole idea is to have fun."

Asked about insurance, he said: "That's taken care of." Williams said Woods had watched stock car racing when he was in the country in 2002 to play in the New Zealand Open.

Woods's lack of time behind the wheel of a stock car should be no problem, Williams said. "He's driven on the freeway in LA a lot, so he's had plenty of experience."

All Black rugby captain Tana Umaga is also entered. *AFP*



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4th Camp John Hay member-guest on

BAGUIO—THE FOURTH Camp John Hay Invitational member-guest tournament will be held today and tomorrow at the Camp John Hay Golf Club course with 58 teams participating. Tee-off is shotgun style at 8 a.m.

The field will be vying for the overall team low net, the overall team low gross, the overall individual gross and the top awards in Class A, Class B, Class C and Class D.

Sponsors are Rudy Project, Club Leisure Management, Camp John Hay Golf Club, Camp John Hay Development Corp., Camp John Hay Manor, Le Chef, Golforce, Metro Rail Transit Corp., Federal Management and Maintenance, Inc., Wilson Sport, DHN Construction, TSAJ Sales Corp and Kork, Inc.

Among the noted teams are Shean Bedi-Jingy Tuason, Jason Lim-Montito Garcia, Nelson Eslao-Rick Madayag, Peng de Tagle-Efren Sarmiento, Choi Cojuangco-Ed Alegrado, Herr Bautista-Peter Chen and Monet Garcia-Dodie Puno.

Subic hosts jet ski tilt tomorrow

THE COUNTRY'S TOP JETSKI riders will battle it out in the kickoff of the 2006 Petron National Jet Ski Series at 9 a.m. tomorrow at the Waterfront Beach of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority.

World Jetski runner-up Paul del Rosario and 1998 champion John Dee lead the elite field. JS-AP acting president Dong Arcilla and Race Director Sonny Yalung urged all riders to bring their standard protective gears.

Call 413-3109 or log on at www.networxjetsports.com for details.

SM Storyland badminton reset

RESPONDING TO POPULAR demand, organizers of the SM Storyland Junior Badminton Camp decided to reset its opening from this weekend to April 29-30.

The first clinic will now be held at SM Southmall on April 29-30 followed by the second clinic at SM Fairview on May 6-7. The competitions will be held on May 13-14 at SM Southmall and May 21 at SM Fairview.

For inquiries, call 8000614 or 9380506.

SPORTS

De La Salle expecting quick UAAP decision

By Jasmine W. Payo

DE LA SALLE UNIVERSITY HOPES a decision will be reached quickly when the UAAP board deliberates on the six-month-old cage controversy involving the Green Archers at 10 a.m. today at the Adamson University.

The league's fact-finding committee recently wrapped up its investigation on the case of the two Archers accused of submitting fake academic documents.

Copies of the report have been furnished to the representatives of the eight member-schools.

"We hope that it will be finished soon," Bro. Bobby Casingal, La Salle's sports development head, said yesterday. "Once the UAAP makes its decision, only then will La Salle makes its move."

There's no assurance, though, that a final verdict will be made after today's deliberation.

"The board will meet and discuss the findings of the committee. It's up to the members of the board to decide on what actions will be taken," said league secretary general Dr. Ricardo Matibag of host Adamson.

Casingal said the Archers' basketball program has been stalled since the university admitted last October that players Mark Benitez and Tim Gatchalian submitted spurious certificates of their Philippine Educational Placement Test to gain entry into the school.

"The team is in limbo," noted Casingal. "We cannot assure the 100 percent competitiveness of the men's basketball team since the UAAP is already in July."

La Salle filed a one-year leave of absence from the men's basketball tournament only. However, the UAAP board turned down the school's request, noting that basketball is one of two mandatory sports in the league.

Suspension from all sports is among the possible sanctions La Salle could face.

"Except for the basketball team, all the teams are running normally, so it would be a big letdown," said Casingal.

Benitez and Gatchalian were part of the Archers' 2004 championship team. Benitez still played in La Salle's team that placed runner-up in the 2005 season, while Gatchalian failed to make it last year.

Both cagers submitted fake certificates of their PEP Test, an exam taken in lieu of a high school diploma to gain entry in college.

In its own investigation, La Salle tagged Archers assistant team manager Manny Salgado and contractual statistician Raul Lacson as the team officials who helped secure the players' false records. The two officials had denied the accusations.

The UAAP investigating committee is headed by Fr. Ermito de Sagon of University of Santo Tomas, Matibag, Josie de Leon of Far Eastern University, Arlene Royo of National University and legal counsel lawyer Rene Villa complete the five-man panel.

STRONG start for Frankie.

Miñoza two shots behind with a 69

SHANGHAI, CHINA—HENRIK Stenson shot a five-under-par 67 Thursday to take a one stroke lead after the first round of the Asian Open.

Stenson made six birdies against one bogey at the Tomson Shanghai Pudong Golf Club course to lead Scotland's Stephen Gallacher and Jean Van de Velde of France on 68.

Colin Montgomerie was two strokes off the pace at 69, in a group of six players that also included Irishman Peter Lawrie, South Korea's Charlie Wi, Thomas Bjorn of Denmark and Frankie Miñoza of the Philippines.

Miñoza, the No. 1 Filipino shotmaker, had nines of 36-33 in his strongest opening round this season, but countrymate Angelo Que faced elimination after starting out with a five-over-par 77.

Like the first-round leader, Miñoza also rolled in six birdies, three of them coming in a row starting on No. 11. He actually birdied three of the four par-5s but also bogeyed three times.

Stenson of Sweden, the world No. 15, and Scotland's Montgomerie, ranked 16th, lead the charge for this year's open after defending champion Ernie Els decided to skip the tournament.

The $1.8 million (euro1.7 million) Asian Open, with a top prize of $300,000, is co-sanctioned by the PGA European Tour and the Asian Tour. *AP*

Ateneo tests UE spikers

AFTER GAINING VALUABLE EXPErience the last time out, Ateneo's head coach believes his Lady Eagles are primed to go all the way in the V-League presented by Shakey's.

"It was a learning experience for us," said coach Louie Gepuela, referring to a semifinal tumble his Lady Eagles took in the semifinals last season, their maiden stint in the fledging league.

The Lady Eagles battle newcomer University of the East in the second of two games scheduled to open the second conference of the tournament at the Blue Eagle gym tomorrow. Short opening rites will be held at 3 p.m. before Philippine Christian and Adamson mix it up at 4 p.m.

The Lady Falcons and the Lady Dolphins are also seeing action in the league for the first time like University of the East, adding flavor to the tournament which will miss traditional powerhouse Santo Tomas, the first champion which begged off after losing its core to graduation.

Hard work pays off for Ali Atienza

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

THE SON OF MANILA MAYOR Lito Atienza, Arnold "Ali" Ilagan Atienza, is all substance when it comes to sports. He is not flashy but he is thoroughly convincing when he talks about sports.

Speaking in measured tone, Ali said in an interview that he is now preparing in earnest members of Team MayniLA for the Second Manila Youth Games National Invitational in October after successfully staging the fifth edition of the MY Games won by athletes from Malate at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

A former Asian taekwondo champion and now chair of the Manila Sports Council, Ali stressed: "Parents should involve their children in sports not for the sole reason that someday they would become sports heroes, but because sports and physical fitness play an important role in society."

Born on Sept. 29, 1972 in Manila, Ali is a true-blue sportsman having been a national athlete, sporting event organizer, team manager and national and international sports official.

As a national athlete, Ali made an impact on the taekwondo scene in 1994 when he beat a highly favored Korean en route to winning the Asian championship at the age of 21. He won the lone gold medal for the Philippines in that 1994 Asian Taekwondo Championships.

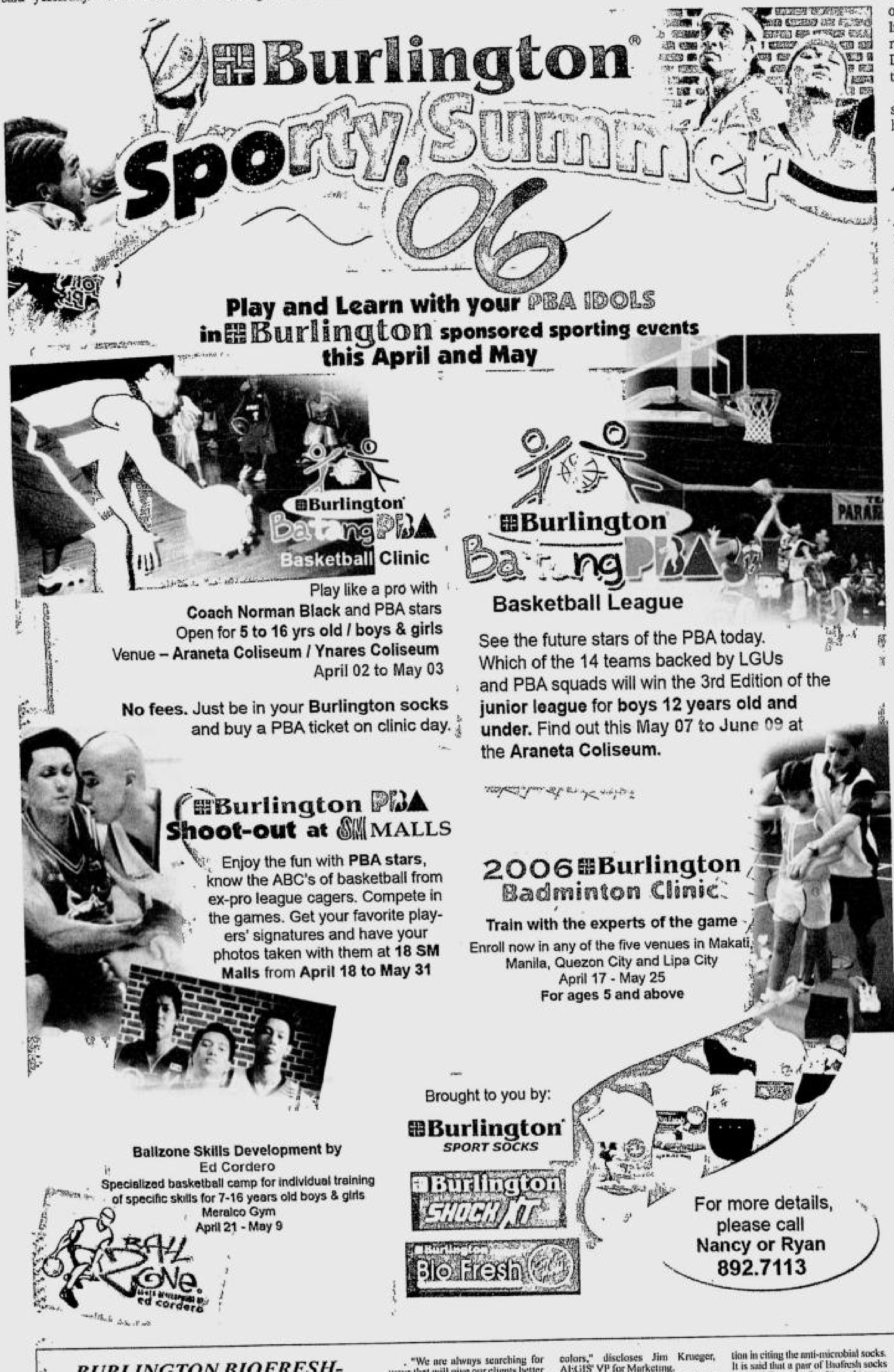
As chair of the Manila Sports Council since 2001, Ali is one of the youngest ever to supervise the sports program of the country's premier city. And during his term, the city was able to successfully host the Manila Youth Games, the MY National Invitational and three editions of the Manila Marathon.

As an international official, he traveled abroad to meet with other sports leaders who gave him valuable lessons in sports development and management practice.

A graduate of De La Salle University (BS-Physics with specialization in Computer Applications, 1989-1994), Ali has been cited for his contributions and achievements in sports by, among others, the Philippine Sportswriters Association, the Sports Communicators Organization of the Philippines and the Philippine Sports Commission.

* * *

WHO'LL WIN THE ASIAN LADIES TOUR? Based on record and form, the sensational Kim Ga-young of Korea is the solid pick to rule the Enerva Asian Ladies 9-Ball Tour set April 26-28 at the Robinson's Galleria. A virtual unknown to Filipino sports fans, Kim is the reigning world champion and the winner of last year's US Ladies Open and the American Ladies Invitational Open. The 20-year-old Kim has defeated, among others, some of the famous names in women's billiards such as Alison Fisher and Karen Corr, whose victims included male players like former world champions Earl Strickland, Johnny Archer and Ralf Souquet.... SOMETHING IS SERIOUSLY WRONG. Red Bull diehards have a right to feel frustrated at the rate things are going for the team right now. Last season, coach Yeng Guiao's charges won the PBA Fiesta Conference in dramatic fashion, beating Alaska, Barangay Ginebra and Purefoods in the quarterfinals, semis and finals, in that order. However, Red Bull has been a profound disappointment in this ongoing Philippine Cup, losing four straight games (the last to the Alaska Aces) and dropping to a lowly 3-6 card. With all the talents Guiao has inherited and drafted, how come the team is not making an impact? Red Bull plays crowd favorite Ginebra tonight at the Big Dome.



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BURLINGTON BIOFRESH- New technology that works for our feet

By Nenet Galang-Pereña

The erratic weather we are experiencing now breeds microorganisms that proliferate in the damp corners of our homes, and woe-begone, our feet.

But not to despair, as Burlington Industries Phils (BIP) Inc, top-maker of quality hosiery for four decades and considered the socks authority, came up with a brilliant innovation recently to address the problem-- Bio Fresh antimicrobial socks. The new technology eliminates bacteria and microorganisms that cause feet odor. This is absorbed into the socks and stays effective after repeated washing. It acts like sword that punctures and disrupts the delicate cell membrane of microorganism that produces the bad smell.

"We are always searching for ways that will give our clients better protection and comfort for their feet," explains Ruddy Tan, BIP's general manager.

Its most recent breakthrough is significantly different and unique as the antimicrobial system does not leave the treated surface and does not affect the normal skin bacteria, nor cause rashes or skin irritations.

The Strength and Adherence Test Results conducted by AEGIS Laboratory International certifies the very high 61% bacteria reduction after 20 washings after 24 hours." Burlington's Bio Fresh Socks passed our test with flying colors," discloses Jim Krueger, AEGIS' VP for Marketing.

Detecting the presence of Bio Fresh in one's socks is so easy: just dip them into a diluted blue-staining solution (BPB) and then rinse with water. The BPB agent will produce a distinctive blue stain that will not be washed away by the water.

Burlington's Biofresh socks for men and ladies which is available at leading department stores nationwide is the recipient of National Shopper's Choice Awards bestowed recently at Dusit Hotel Nikko in Makati City. For its citation, the judges underscored the company's commitment to innovations for ultimate end-user satisfaction in citing the anti-microbial socks. It is said that a pair of Biofresh socks works fully even after 50 washings or one year of regular weekly usage. Burlington brand managers Niño S. Mas and Mark Salecina accepted the trophy from the award-giving body.

The brand was likewise a winner of the Top Quality Socks recognition during the 2005 Brand Champions- A Tribute to the Best held at the Fiesta Pavilion of the Manila Hotel.

The Chinese have this aphorism: *The journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step.* And if one is wearing Burlington's Biofresh sports or casual socks, those miles will not only smell sweet but endless.

ADVT.

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ENTERTAINMENT

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Editor Emmie G. Velarde

What 'Idol' clone?

By Marinel R. Cruz

ELISE Estrada

ROSEMARIE Tan

AICELLE Santos

THE REALITY TALENT SEARCH "PINOY POP Superstar" on GMA 7 is an "original concept of the network," not a clone of the phenomenally popular Fox talent show "American Idol," according to "Pinoy" program manager Hazel Abonita.

"The format of 'PPS' is very different," Abonita told INQUIRER Entertainment on Wednesday. "[In fact] if the forthcoming 'Philippine Idol' will only be the local 'AI,' it shouldn't be a rival of 'PPS.'"

ABC 5 recently acquired the "AI" franchise from FremantleMedia. "Philippine Idol" premieres in July. "AI" itself is a franchise of "Pop Idol," which originated in the United Kingdom in 2001.

Abonita noted that a "PPS" contender has to win in a qualifying round, then slug it out with different challengers for at least four weeks.

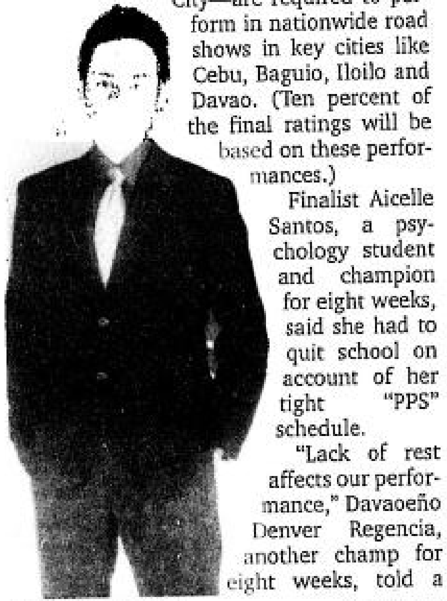
Constructive

Also, she said, compared to the three "AI" judges—Simon Cowell, Paula Abdul and Randy Jackson—"PPS" jurors Jaya, Danny Tan and Floy Quintos give "only constructive" criticisms.

Abonita added that all seven finalists—who will face off on May 6 in a grand showdown at the Araneta Coliseum in Quezon City—are required to perform in nationwide road shows in key cities like Cebu, Baguio, Iloilo and Davao. (Ten percent of the final ratings will be based on these performances.)

Finalist Aicelle Santos, a psychology student and champion for eight weeks, said she had to quit school on account of her tight "PPS" schedule.

"Lack of rest affects our performance," Davaoeño Denver Regencia, another champ for eight weeks, told a


DENVER Regencia

WHAT/ A2-3

Mon: Pinoys in London made it easy

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—FILIPINOS IN London boosted the confidence of singer Mon David to emerge as grand champion in the recent London International Jazz Competition.

David cannot seem to thank them enough: "It was overwhelming. Up till the finals, they were *nakatutok* (keenly observing) including my batch mates (Pampanga High School Class '70), Ambassador Edgardo Espiritu and his staff."

Speaking to the INQUIRER after a tribute by the provincial government and cultural groups in his home province, David added, "The glow on their faces while I performed was a big factor in my triumph." At no point did he feel he was in a foreign land, competing against 106 singers from 27 countries, he said.

DAVID: Connecting people

Coming home to the big welcome on Monday, it was obvious the 52-year-old vocalist had not shaken off the joy from that euphoric bonding with compatriots. It was clear, David said, that he was in the tilt less for himself than for his country.

Single obstacle

The only obstacle, if it could be called that, he said, was the cold weather.

Both the judges and his co-finalists had given the Filipino contender high ratings.

"One told me it was my focus on the lyrics that gave me the edge," David recounted. "Another said it was my confidence."

He credited his long years of experience as a performer in the Philippines. "Musically and technically," he said, "all the finalists were very good."

Also on Monday, President Macapagal-Arroyo officially congratulated David for the "well-deserved" triumph.

In a letter sent through the Center for Kapampangan Studies of the Holy Angel University, the

MON/ A2-4

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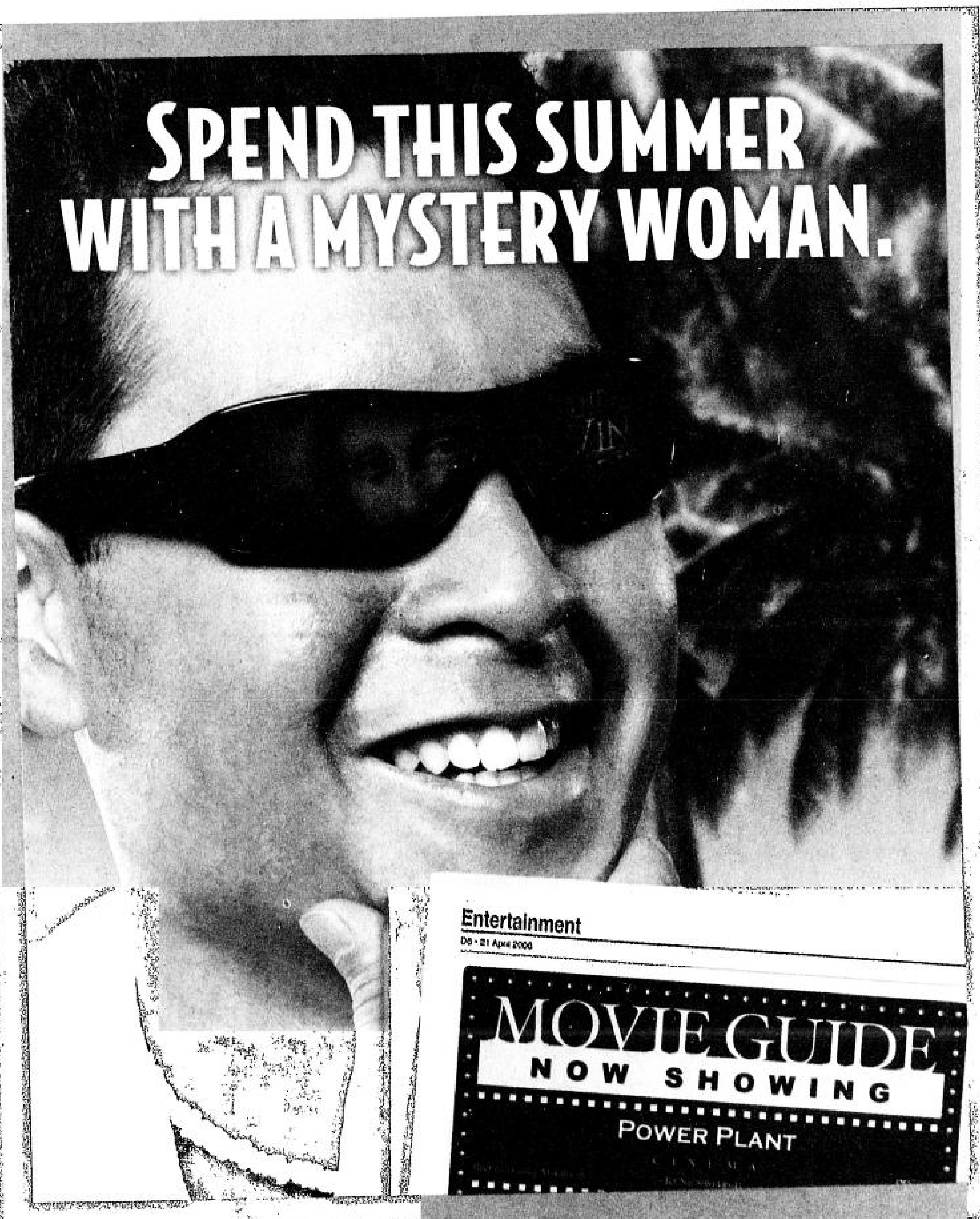
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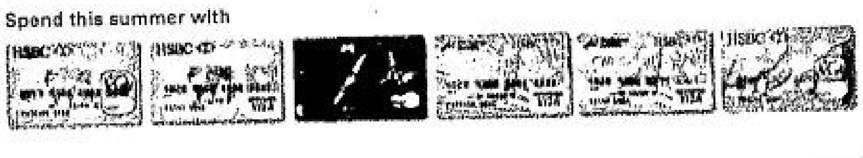

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Eva Longoria 'dressed to the 9' by Monique Lhuillier

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD
Ruben V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—EVA Longoria showed up at a recent press con literally dressed to the 9 by Filipina designer Monique Lhuillier.

Eva wore Monique's sparkling diamond-studded pendant in the shape of a 9—the jersey number of her boyfriend, San Antonio Spurs standout Tony Parker.

That much the "Desperate Housewives" star is devoted to her French-speaking basketball player (born in Belgium, raised in France). "You know what? I am that girl," she admitted. "I am really loyal. I'm really supportive and this was actually my Christmas gift [from Tony]. It was designed by Monique Lhuillier. [The pendant] just looks like a 9 but it wasn't meant to (laughs)."

The actress, who is branching into movies via the political thriller "The Sentinel" with Michael Douglas and Kiefer Sutherland, even has jeans embellished with nine in rhinestones. "People send me things," the petite (only 5' 2" tall) former Miss Corpus Christi (Texas) USA said, looking amused. "It's not like I want number 9 on everything. It just happens to be ... like when you say, 'I love frogs' and all of a sudden, you have a desk full of frog paperweights, frog pencils and so on. It kind of spun out of control (laughs)."

'World's hottest'

After the press con, Eva told me, "I go to Monique a lot." Apparently, she meant not just for clothes but for jewelry as well. Eva shared her excitement about the designer's baby boy, born last January.

In the interview, TV's Gabrielle was asked to confirm rumors that Tony, who has a French hip-hop album, has bought her an engagement ring as well. "No," she laughed, holding up ring-free fingers before the assembled writers. "No plans." Maxim magazine's "# 1 Hottest Woman in the World" in 2005 splits her time between San Antonio, Texas, where she watches Tony's home court games whenever she can, and Los Angeles.

Eva's first marriage in 2002, to soap opera actor Tyler Christopher, ended quickly. Of that union, she revealed, "We eloped and went to Vegas. We really didn't think it through. What it taught me was that marriage is a very serious sacrament that I wasn't ready for at that time. Hopefully, the next time it happens, it's going to be well thought out."

The 31-year-old Texas native seems to be carefully plotting her show biz career moves. "The Sentinel" will be followed by another movie outing, "Harsh Times," an indie drama with Christian Bale and Freddie Rodriguez. In the former, produced by Michael Douglas, she got the part of a secret service agent, thanks in large part to "Desperate Housewives."

"Michael, luckily, is a huge fan of the show," the actress explained. "He and Catherine watch it all the time so he knew my work. Michael knew from the beginning that I was a tomboy, that I'm a great shot. He knew I grew up in Texas so he really believed that this character would be a perfect fit."

"I WAS an ugly duckling," says Maxim magazine's "Hottest Woman."

How great a shooter is she? "I shoot better than 90 percent of the police officers in the country," she told me, laughing.

Guys, she is not joking. It turns out that diminutive Eva has been shooting guns since she was, believe it or not, 5 years old. Was she scared being taught by her dad to hunt and shoot at such an early age, I asked the plucky Texan. "It came naturally," she answered. "I was raised on a ranch. We would go target hunting and shooting all the time with my dad. We would shoot coffee cans, beer bottles and fence posts." But she made sure to add, "I'm obviously very educated on how to handle a gun. My dad did a great job of raising us about gun safety and all of that."

Moral boundaries

On which character she identifies with most, the "sexpot" (her word) Gabrielle or pistol-packing novice agent Jill in "The Sentinel," Eva replied, "Oh, God, they're completely different. Playing Jill is probably closer to me and who I am. She has moral boundaries. She's good with a gun. I'm good with a gun (laughs). She's very adamant about not using her looks to move forward, which is the exact opposite of Gabrielle (laughs). I picked 'The Sentinel' because I wanted to venture out of 'Desperate Housewives' before people could only see me as Gabrielle."

"Desperate Housewives" fans, worry not. Eva is not leaving Wisteria Lane. At least not for now. She divulged that not one, but five babies play her adopted infant daughter Lily on the hit series. Since baby actors can't be overworked (this is Hollywood, after all, baby), a set of twins and a set of triplets play the daughter of TV's sexiest mom.

Eva herself likes to point out that she was not the cutest baby in the world. "I was born the ugly duckling," she declared, a refrain that she brings up in interviews because she knows it makes for good copy. "All my sisters are very light-skinned. They have hazel eyes and blonde hair. I was the first born dark so I was called *la prieta fea* growing up, which means 'the ugly dark one.' My parents would say that to me.

Scarred

"It taught me really early to develop a personality, a sense of humor, a lot of other skills and to focus on my education. I didn't blossom until college, until I started doing the pageants. I think it was a by-product of being called ugly my whole life. I keep telling my mom she could have scarred me but she didn't (laughs).

But it was from the heart that she spoke of why she has been an active volunteer at the Special Olympics. Eva disclosed, "My oldest sister is mentally challenged. I grew up with her being the light and center of our life. My mother became a special education teacher because of my sister. So we have been involved with the Special Olympics since I can remember.

"We were born into my sister's world so I know nothing else. It wasn't as if all of a sudden, my life changed and I didn't get as much attention because this child needed more attention. It was always that way with us. The only world I know is living with her, catering to her and supporting any causes that help the development of mentally challenged individuals. She's an amazing human being. I just couldn't see my life any other way."

(E-mail the columnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com.)

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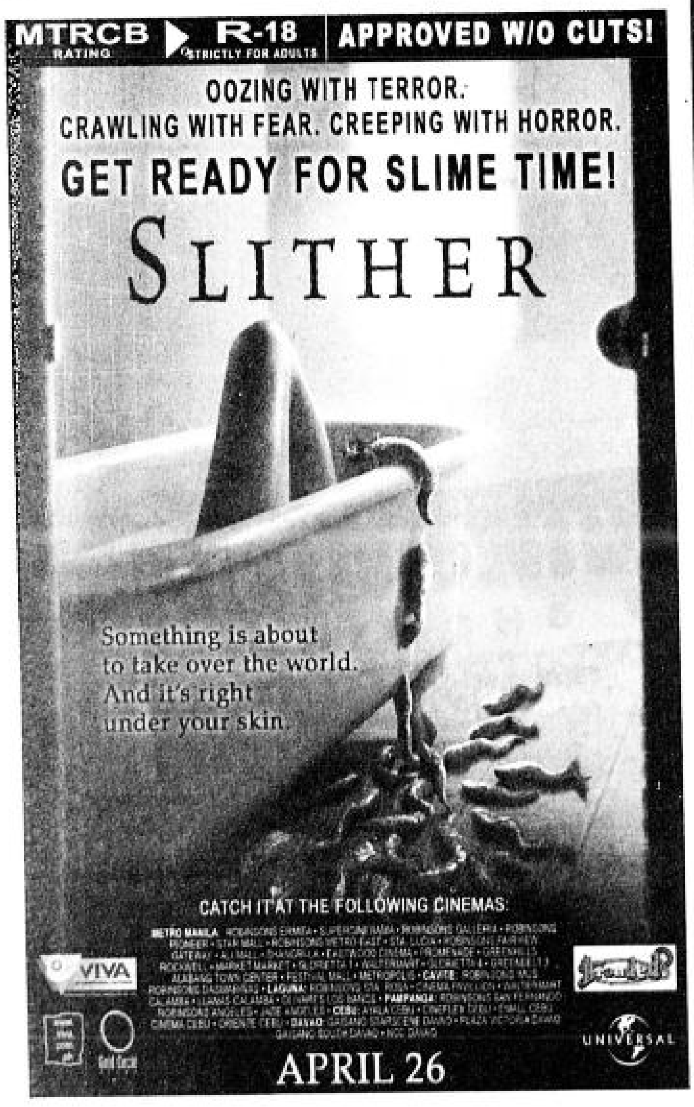
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HARRY Santos

IRRA Cenina

What 'Idol' clone?

From page A2-1

group of writers on Monday. "After this press con, we are proceeding to Cagayan."

The other finalists are Harry Santos, champion for seven weeks; Irra Cenina, four weeks; Gerald Santos, four weeks; Elise Estrada, winner in Canada; and Rosemarie Tan, winner in the United States.

Does your choice of songs for the competition affect your chances of winning?

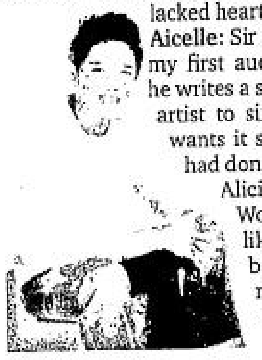
Aicelle: Definitely. I'm into soul and R&B. I also like jazz, but I need to reach out to the *masa*, who would vote for me the most.

Denver:I think winning is based on the total package, not just the kind of songs we choose.

What has been the most unfair comment you got from the judges??

Denver: Sir Danny said my performance lacked heart.

Aicelle: Sir Danny told me on my first audition that, when he writes a song, he wants the artist to sing it the way he wants it sung. He wished I had done that when I sang Alicia Keys' "Natural Woman." He didn't like my version. I begged for him to make me sing again. I did "Inseparable"—and passed!



GERALD Santos

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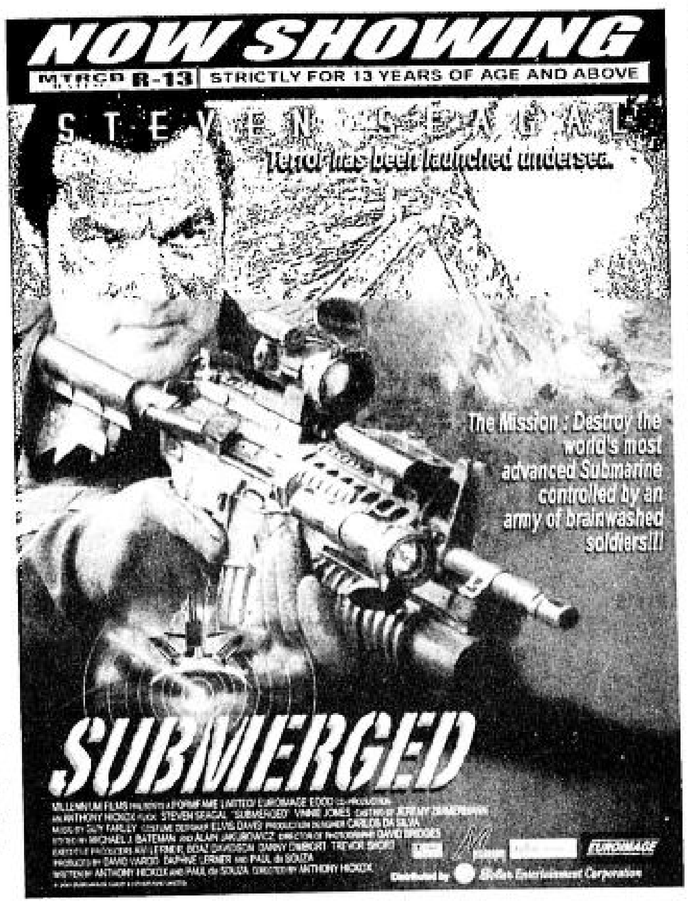

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12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

2 PAMAHIIN
12.40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

3 SUBMERGED
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

4 THE COOLER
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

5 D' LUCKY ONES
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

6 EIGHT BELOW
11:40 2:15 4:50 7:25 10:00

7 THE HILLS HAVE EYES
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

8 TRISTAN AND ISOLDE
1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00

9 ICE AGE 2
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

10 MOMENTS OF LOVE
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 ICE AGE 2
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 9:50

2 TRISTAN AND ISOLDE
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

3 AMERICAN SOLDIER 12:35 3:00
BASIC INSTINCT 2 5:15 7:35 10:00

4 PAMAHIIN
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

5 SUBMERGED
12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00

6 EIGHT BELOW
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

7 D' LUCKY ONES
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 TRISTAN AND ISOLDE
1:00 3:40 6:20 9:00

2 ICE AGE 2
12:20 2:30 4:40 6:50 9:00

3 D' LUCKY ONES
11:25 1:50 4:15 6:40 9:05

4 BASIC INSTINCT 2
12:20 2:30 4:40 6:50 9:00

5 THE HILLS HAVE EYES
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

6 MOMENTS OF LOVE
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

7 EIGHT BELOW
1:00 3:40 6:20 9:00

8 PAMAHIIN
11:25 1:50 4:15 6:40 9:05

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 D' LUCKY ONES
2 TRISTAN AND ISOLDE
3 EIGHT BELOW
4 PAMAHIIN
5 BASIC INSTINCT 2

CITISQUARE MALABON 289-2675

1 MOMENTS OF LOVE
2 D' LUCKY ONES
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER 687-6378

1 SUBMERGED
2 EIGHT BELOW
3 TRISTAN AND ISOLDE
4 D' LUCKY ONES

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3 NANNY MCPHEE
4 D' LUCKY ONES
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1 EIGHT BELOW
2 BASIC INSTINCT 2
3 PAMAHIIN
4 D' LUCKY ONES
5 TRISTAN AND ISOLDE

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1 TRISTAN AND ISOLDE
2 PAMAHIIN
3 D' LUCKY ONES
4 EIGHT BELOW

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1 PAMAHIIN
2 TRISTAN AND ISOLDE
3 EIGHT BELOW
4 D' LUCKY ONES

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1 TRISTAN AND ISOLDE
2 D' LUCKY ONES
3 PAMAHIIN
4 BASIC INSTINCT 2
5 JUST FRIENDS
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1 EIGHT BELOW
2 D' LUCKY ONES
3 ULTRAVIOLET
4 THE HILLS HAVE EYES
5 HOUSE OF FURY
6 ICE AGE 2

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2 D' LUCKY ONES
3 PAMAHIIN
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5 SHE'S THE MAN
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7 JUST FRIENDS
8 BANDIDAS
9 MOMENTS OF LOVE
10 D LUCKY ONES
11 FINAL DESTINATION 3
12 TRISTAN & ISOLDE

SM CITY NORTH EDSA

1 TRISTAN & ISOLDE
2 MOMENTS OF LOVE
3 PAMAHIIN
4 ICE AGE 2
5 AMERICAN SOLDIERS
6 EIGHT BELOW
7 SUBMERGED
8 D LUCKY ONES

SM CITY DASMARINAS

1 PAMAHIIN
2 D LUCKY ONES
3 EIGHT BELOW
4 TRISTAN & ISOLDE

SM CITY FAIRVIEW

1 ULTRAVIOLET
2 BANDIDAS
3 FINAL DESTINATION 3
4 EIGHT BELOW
5 D LUCKY ONES
6 PAMAHIIN
7 SUBMERGED
8 MOMENTS OF LOVE
9 ICE AGE 2
10 AMERICAN SOLDIERS
11 VENOM
12 TRISTAN & ISOLDE

SM CITY STA. MESA

1 ICE AGE 2
2 SUBMERGED
3 EIGHT BELOW
4 MOMENTS OF LOVE
5 D LUCKY ONES
6 VENOM
7 TRISTAN & ISOLDE
8 BANDIDAS
9 MOMENTS OF LOVE
10 AMERICAN SOLDIERS

SM CITY BICUTAN

1 EIGHT BELOW
2 PAMAHIIN
3 D LUCKY ONES
4 ICE AGE 2

SM CITY SAN LAZARO

1 ICE AGE 2
2 EIGHT BELOW
3 TRISTAN & ISOLDE
4 MOMENTS OF LOVE
5 D LUCKY ONES
6 PAMAHIIN

SM CITY MANILA

1 TRISTAN & ISOLDE
2 VENOM
3 SUBMERGED
4 ICE AGE 2
5 BANDIDAS
6 EIGHT BELOW
7 D LUCKY ONES
8 SHE'S THE MAN
9 MOMENTS OF LOVE
10 FINAL DESTINATION 3
11 AMERICAN SOLDIERS
12 PAMAHIIN

SM CITY SOUTHMALL

1 ICE AGE 2
2 D LUCKY ONES
3 EIGHT BELOW
4 PAMAHIIN
5 MOMENTS OF LOVE
6 TRISTAN & ISOLDE
7 SUBMERGED
8 VENOM
9 AMERICAN SOLDIERS

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1 PAMAHIIN
2 D LUCKY ONES
3 MOMENTS OF LOVE
4 EIGHT BELOW

SM CITY SUCAT

1 ICE AGE 2
2 PAMAHIIN
3 D LUCKY ONES
4 EIGHT BELOW

LUZON

SM CITY BAGUIO

1 PAMAHIIN
2 D LUCKY ONES
3 ICE AGE 2
4 EIGHT BELOW

SM CITY MARILAO

1 EIGHT BELOW
2 PAMAHIIN
3 D LUCKY ONES
4 MOMENTS OF LOVE

SM CITY BATANGAS

1 EIGHT BELOW
2 D LUCKY ONES
3 PAMAHIIN
4 BANDIDAS

SM CITY BACOOR

1 FINAL DESTINATION 3
2 ICE AGE 2
3 PAMAHIIN
4 MOMENTS OF LOVE
5 EIGHT BELOW
6 D LUCKY ONES
7 TRISTAN & ISOLDE
8 CHINESE TALL STORY

SM CITY STA. ROSA

1 EIGHT BELOW
2 MOMENTS OF LOVE
3 PAMAHIIN
4 D LUCKY ONES

SM CITY PAMPANGA

1 PAMAHIIN
2 JUST FRIENDS
3 EIGTH BELOW
4 TRISTAN & ISOLDE
5 MOMENTS OF LOVE
6 D LUCKY ONES

SM CITY LUCENA

1 TRISTAN & ISOLDE
2 PAMAHIIN
3 FINAL DESTINATION 3
4 D LUCKY ONES

SM CITY MOLINO

1 D LUCKY ONES
2 PAMAHIIN
3 EIGHT BELOW
4 MOMENTS OF LOVE

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU

1 TRISTAN & ISOLDE
2 SHAGGY DOG
3 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
4 EIGHT BELOW
5 PAMAHIIN
6 SHE'S THE MAN
7 D LUCKY ONES
8 ICE AGE 2

SM CITY ILOILO

1 SHE'S THE MAN
2 RESERVED
3 D LUCKY ONES
4 ULTRAVIOLET
5 PAMAHIIN
6 NANNY McPHEE
7 RESERVED
8 EIGHT BELOW

SM CITY DAVAO

1 EIGHT BELOW
2 CHINESE TALL STORY
3 D LUCKY ONES
4 JUST FRIENDS
5 SHAGGY DOG
6 ULTRAVIOLET

SM CITY CAGAYAN

1 EIGHT BELOW
2 D LUCKY ONES
3 ICE AGE 2
4 V FOR VENDETTA

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the cooler

Exclusive

The Cooler: 12 nominations. 6 awards from various international award-giving bodies

Bernie Lootz (Macy) is the unluckiest man in Las Vegas. His bad luck is contagious. Wanting to knock out their highest rollers. The Shangri_la Hotel and Casino, one of the last mob-run casinos in town, decides to use Bernie as a "Cooler" to reverse their lucky streaks. The scheme goes well until Bernie falls in love with a cocktail waitress, Natalie (Bello), who becomes his "lady luck" - much to the alarm of the casino's crooked director (Baldwin), who is dead set on putting an end to the romance and Bernie's new-found luck.

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MOVIE GUIDE

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1 (DOLBY) ICE AGE 2 *GP*
2 (DOLBY) EIGHT BELOW *GP*
3 (DOLBY) SUBMERGED *R13*
4 (DOLBY) TRISTAN & ISOLDE *R13*

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1 (DDS) SUBMERGED
2 (SDDS) BASIC INSTINCT-2
3 (DTS) THE HILLS HAVE EYES
4 (GOLD-DTS) TRITAN & ISOLDE
5 (GOLD (DOLBY) AMEICAN SOLDIERS
6 (GOLD (SDDS) EIGHT BELOW
7 (GOLD (DOLBY) ICE AGE-2
8 MOMENTS OF LOVE
9 PAMAHIIN
10 D' LUCKY ONES

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City). tel 687.6963 or 72

1 (DOLBY) TRISTAN & ISOLDE
2 (DOLBY) ICE AGE 2
3 (DOLBY) EIGHT BELOW
4 (DOLBY) SUBMERGED

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Cinema 2000 Waltermart
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1 D' LUCKY ONES
2 (DTS) PAMAHIIN
3 (DOLBY) TRISTAN & ISOLDE
4 EIGHT BELOW

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146

1 D' LUCKY ONES
2 (DOLBY) EIGHT BELOW
3 (DTS) TRISTAN & ISOLDE
4 PAMAHIIN

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1 PAMAHIIN
2 D' LUCKY ONES
3 (DOLBY) ULTRAVIOLET

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1 PAMAHIIN
2 D' LUCKY ONES
3 (DOLBY) ULTRAVIOLET
4 (DTS) ICE AGE-2

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320

1 PAMAHIIN
2 D' LUCKY ONES
3 (DOLBY) FINAL DESTINATION

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan)

1 NANNY MCPHEE
2 PAMAHIIN

CINEMA 2000
Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216

1 PAMAHIIN
2 EIGHT BELOW
3 D' LUCKY ONES
4 TRISTAN & ISOLDE

Blue Wave MARIKINA
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927

1 (DOLBY) EIGHT BELOW
2 (DOLBY) D' LUCKY ONES
3 (DOLBY) PAMAHIIN
4 (DOLBY) TRISTAN & ISOLDE

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228

1 (DOLBY) TRISTAN & ISOLDE
2 SUBMERGED
3 D' LUCKY ONES
4 PAMAHIIN
5 EIGHT BELOW

starmall EDSA-SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150

3 PAMAHIIN
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) EIGHT BELOW
5 COED SCANDAL

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1 ULTRAVIOLET
2 THE HILLS OF EYES
3 BASIC INSTINCT-2
4 16 BLOCKS

metropolis star cinema
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504286, 5433994

1 COED SCANDAL
2 PAMAHIIN
3 EIGHT BELOW
4 D' LUCKY ONES

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1 D' LUCKY ONES
2 BANDIDAS
3 PAMAHIIN

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)

1 EIGHT BELOW
2 THE HILLS OF EYES

THEATRES
NE Pacific Mall Cabanatuan. Telephone No. (044) 600-3026

1 NANNY MCPHEE
3 PAMAHIIN
3 D' LUCKY ONES

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX) EIGHT BELOW
2 TRISTAN & ISOLDE
3 (DTS EX) D' LUCKY ONES
4 PAMAHIIN

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☆ D' LUCKY ONES
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Centre Plaza Cinema
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1 ICE AGE-2
2 PAMAHIIN

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748

1 ULTRA VIOLET
2 ICE AGE-2

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS) GOD ARMY
2 U-BELT
3 HIYAS SA PARAISO
4 (DTS) JUST FRIEND

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY) TRISTAN & ISOLDE
2 PAMAHIIN
3 (DTS) D' LUCKY ONES
4 KISKISAN
5 EIGHT BELOW

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1 EIGHT BELOW
2 D' LUCKY ONES
3 THE HILLS HAVE EYES
4 PAMAHIIN

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1 BANDIDAS
2 ROOM SERVICE

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Cele

WE CAUGHT A PREVIOUS SEASON of the celebrity dance contest "Shall We Dance" on ABC-5 and found it occasionally compelling but more generally weak, because some of the celebrity contestants in question didn't work hard enough on their ballroom dancing challenges.

Happily, that can't be said of the show's latest edition, which had its monthly finals two Sundays ago. The celebrities vying for the terpsichorean tilt's top monthly prize were so good that, instead of two finalists, the show's jurors chose three—**Mystica, William Martinez** and **Wowee de Guzman**, with their respective dance partners—choreographers.

That was a tribute to the three team's talents, hard work and commitment, which placed them way above some other celebrity contestants who were unwilling to get out of their stellar comfort zones.

The three celebrity finalists weren't limited by such smugness or laziness. They threw themselves into the challenge at hand, momentarily forgetting that they were stars who no longer had to bust a gut to impress viewers.

As a result, they came up with dance routines that showcased them in a new light. In the process, they impressed the jurors, viewers—and even themselves! Best of all, they discovered that they had much more to develop in themselves, and thus got a new lease on their performing lives.

The first celebrity to strut his stuff in the finals was Wowee de Guzman. He and his partner danced so compellingly that they set a high standard for the other finalists to match.

Mystica and her partner opted for a slower number, but banked on a seductive partnership that enabled them to also raise viewers' temperature in their own way.

For his part, William Martinez complemented his dance number's choreographic flourishes with some tongue-in-cheek touches that were uniquely his.

Wowee put up a good fight, but when the smoke finally cleared up, it was Mystica who romped off with the monthly finals' top plum.

In our book, however, all three finalist celebrities and their partners were winners because they went far beyond their comfort zones and pushed themselves to the limit in coming up with their truly outstanding dance numbers. May we all learn an inspiring lesson from their gutsy example.

'Ice Age 2'

IN ONLY 12 days, "Ice Age 2: The Meltdown" grossed P80 million nationwide, making it the biggest March release ever in the Philippines, and the biggest-grossing animated feature to be shown here. The film is a 20th Century Fox production released here by Warner Bros.

'Tipa'

NYOY Volante jams with the country's top guitarists in "Tipa," a rare musical event at the Teatrino in Greenhills, on May 10, 11, 12 and 13. Joining Nyoy are **Paolo Santos, Pido, Noel Cabangon, Maegan Aguilar, Gary Granada** and Ra-

---

Mon: Pinoys in London ...

From page A2-1

President cited David's "tireless advocacy to promote Filipino culture."

Ms Arroyo urged him to "to continue to win the hearts of music enthusiasts here and abroad as you represent the best that the Filipino can be," and "continue to do the Philippines proud as you share your gift of song with the rest of the world."

As a tribute to David and all Kapampangan achievers in the arts, the provincial government declared March 22 "Kapampangan Artists Day."

Truly Kapampangan

David, a native of Sto. Tomas town, has recorded Kapampangan songs. The Pampanga anthem, "Himno ning Kapampangan" and the pop ditty "Kapampangan Ku" are two of his signature songs.

To David, the London stint validated a belief he had long held about music. "In a jazz bar one evening, some British students asked me to sing a song in my native tongue. I did 'Abe Mu Ku (I Am with You).' The language was of course strange to them, yet we managed to transcend that barrier. Music really connects people."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

NMENT

rity dancers go beyond their comfort zones

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

mon "RJ" Jacinto (May 11 and 13). Call 721-6726, 891-5610 or 533-0642.

Backroom caravan

BACKROOM'S summer musical caravan hits the Ynares Center in Antipolo on April 28, and the Mr. Golf Driving Range in San Fernando, Pampanga on April 29. Other performances: May 12 at Del Rio Splash Resort in Marbel City. May 13 at South Koronadal Gym and Cultural Center, also in Marbel. And May 20 at the De La Salle Gym in Bacolod City. Call 435-3808.

Feedback

FROM PAUL R. Mortel: "Last March 30, I viewed 'Moments of Love; at Cinema 3 at Gateway, Cubao. The theater did not [play] the Philippine National Anthem. Isn't this required?"

'Aliwan Fiesta'

THE MANILA Broadcasting Co., together with the cities of Manila and Pasay and the Cultural Center of the Philippines, is staging "Aliwan Fiesta 2006," grand national championship of all festivals, from April 27 to 29. Thousands of cultural dance performers from all over the country will participate in spirited street dancing that displays the richness of their respective regions' culture and traditions. Contests include the Dance Parade Competition, Float Competition and Reyna ng Aliwan beauty pageant. Huge prizes are at stake.

A grand parade will kick off the culminating activities on April 29, starting from the Quirino Grandstand and ending in front of Star City at the CCP Complex.

'The Sentinel'

KIEFER Sutherland co-stars with Michael Douglas, Kim Basinger and Eva Longoria in "The Sentinel," an action-packed thriller.

EASTWOOD CINEMAS

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5) Quezon City

For inquiries, call:
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1	TRISTAN & ISOLDE	11:55, 2:45, 5:35, 8:25, 11:00	R-13
2	ICE AGE 2	12:20, 2:50, 5:20, 7:50, 10:30	G
3	EIGHT BELOW	12:30, 3:10, 5:50, 8:30, 11:00	GP
4	SUBMERGED	1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00	R-13

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Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41

SUBMERGED R13 1:35,3:45,5:55,8:05,10:15	TRISTAN AND ISOLDE R13 12:15,2:45,5:15, 7:45,10:15	EIGHT BELOW GP 12:00,2:30,5:00, 7:30,10:00
D' LUCKY ONES GP 1:10,3:20,5:30, 7:40,9:50	AMERICAN SOLDIERS R13 12:45,2:55,5:05, 7:15,9:25	ICE AGE 2 G 11:30,1:30,3:30, 5:30,7:30,9:30

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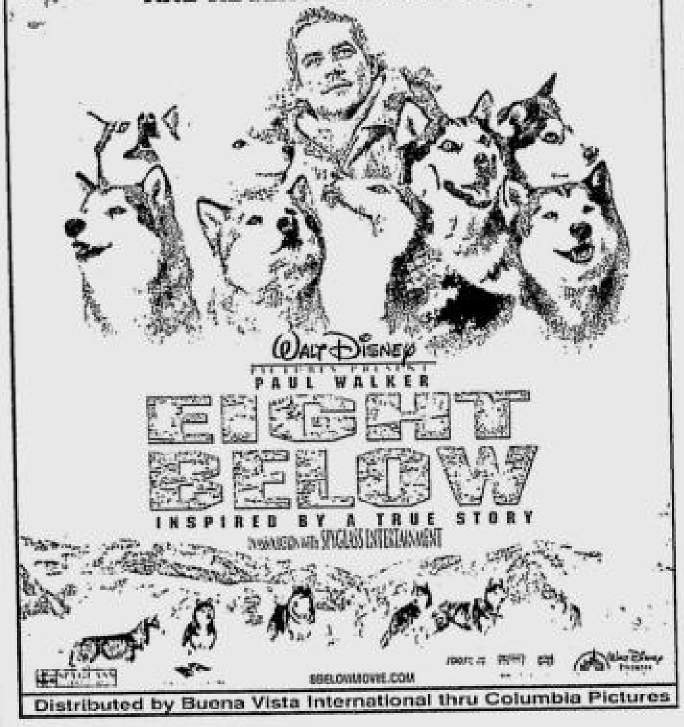

2ND WEEK

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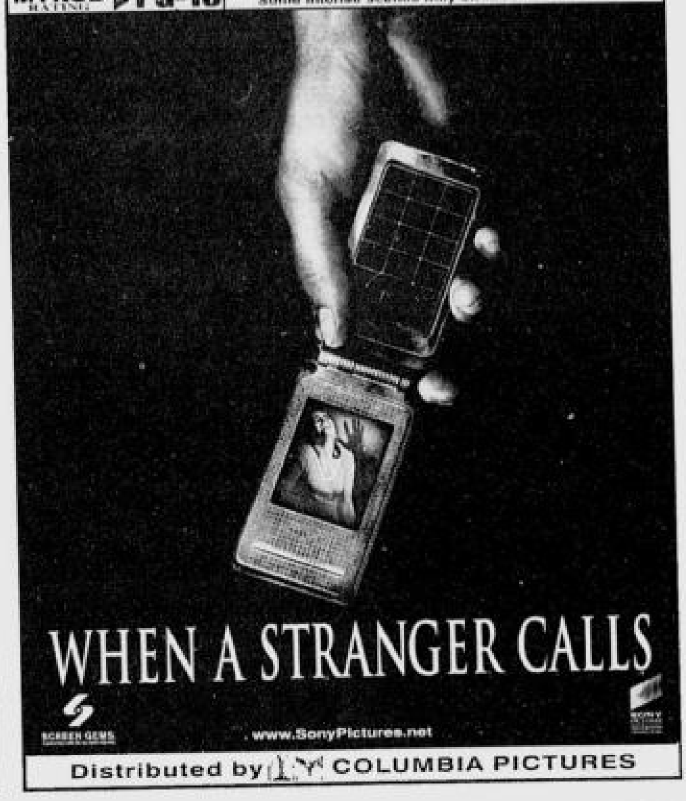

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WHEN A STRANGER CALLS

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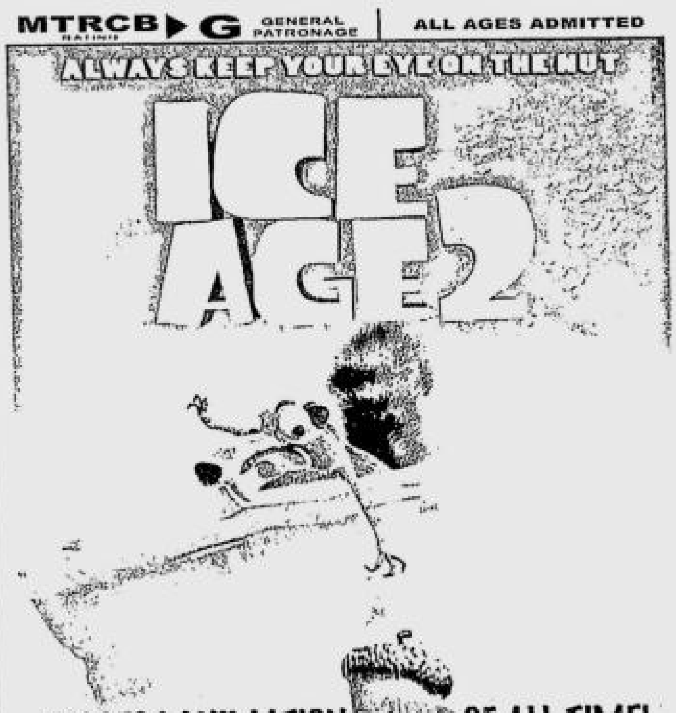

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ALWAYS KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE NUT

ICE AGE 2

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AT THE CINEMAS THX

Reserve your tickets by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.
Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729 7777

G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 D' LUCKY ONES	2 EIGHT BELOW	3 PAMAHIIN	4 SUBMERGED	
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 ICE AGE 2: THE MELTDOWN	2 D' LUCKY ONES	3 THX TRISTAN & ISOLDE 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS		
	4 SUBMERGED	5 JUST FRIENDS	6 EIGHT BELOW	7 PAMAHIIN	
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 EIGHT BELOW	2 ICE AGE 2: THE MELTDOWN			
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX ICE AGE 2: THE MELTDOWN 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX EIGHT BELOW 1:20, 3:50, 6:20, 8:50, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS			
	3 THE HILLS HAVE EYES 1:50, 4:00, 6:10, 8:20, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 RENT 1:15, 3:45, 6:15, 8:45, 11:15 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 TRISTAN & ISOLDE 1:20, 3:50, 6:20, 8:50, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS		
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX EIGHT BELOW	2 D' LUCKY ONES			
	3 ICE AGE 2: THE MELTDOWN	4 PAMAHIIN	5 TRISTAN & ISOLDE		
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 EIGHT BELOW	2 TRISTAN & ISOLDE	3 SHE'S THE MAN	4 D' LUCKY ONES	
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 D' LUCKY ONES	2 SUBMERGED			
	3 PAMAHIIN	4 EIGHT BELOW	5 ICE AGE 2: THE MELTDOWN		

At the Activity Center

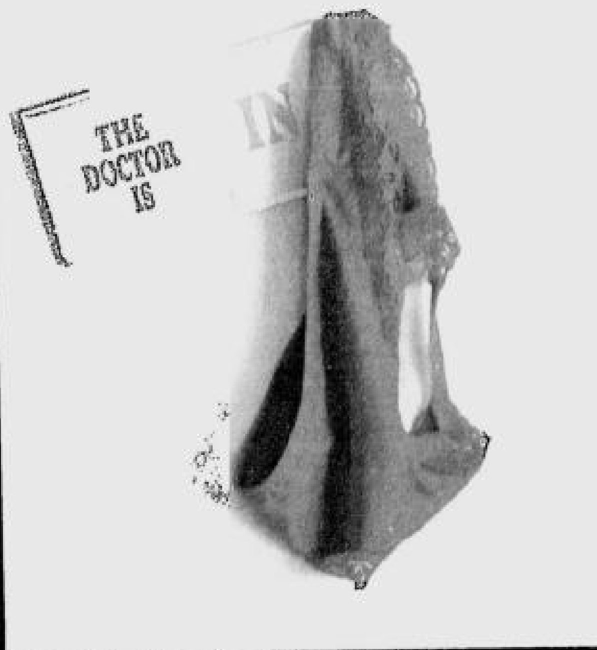
Customer Service text hotline: 0917 6095900
Customer Service Numbers: Glorietta - 752 7272; from 10am to 8pm
Greenbelt - 752 4853; from 11am to 12mn
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; from 10am to 8pm
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Teenzone Event April 21, 2006	Automatic Center Exhibit April 17 to May 2, 2006
AYALA CENTER CEBU	MARKET! MARKET!
Child Learning Foundation's Culminating Activity April 21, 2006	Cartoon Network Summer Camp April 22, 2006

GREENBELT — A Day With An Artist
April 22 to 29, 2006

Greenbelt Onstage — Repertory Philippines presents TWO & TWO MAKE SEX
at REP's Globe Theater - April 21, 22, 23, 28, 29, 30, May 5, 6 & 7
For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710

Ayala MUSEUM — Registration is now ongoing for Ayala Museum's Summer Art Festival Workshop 2006
For inquiries, please call 757-7117 to 21 loc 29 or visit www.ayalamuseum.org



REPERTORY PHILIPPINES

THE DOCTOR IS IN

and he's treating your wife right now

2&2 MAKE SEX

a comedy by Richard Harris & Leslie Darbon
Directed by Joy Virata

April 21-23, 28-30 May 5-7
Rep's Globe Theatre at Onstage, Greenbelt 1
Call 8870710 or 8919999 (Ticketworld)
tickets at P500, P300 and P200

GLORIETTA TEEN FAIR

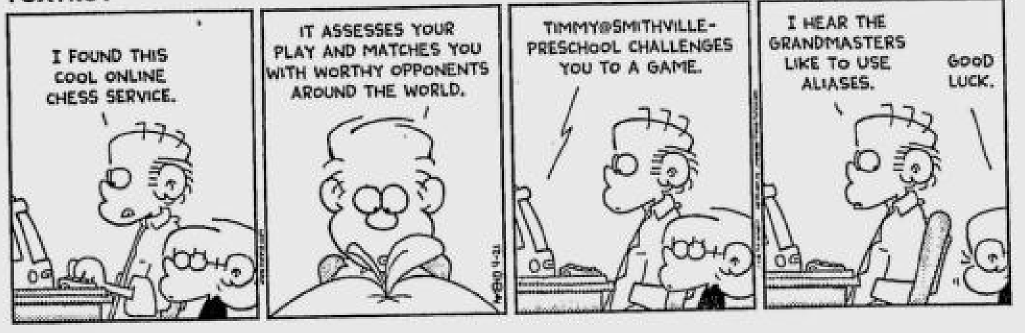
April 21, 2006 12pm-6pm
Glorietta Activity Center

- Teen Tattoo Booth
- Teen Pix Booth
- Fashion Show (Bayo, Tomato, Converse)
- Celebrity Snag-A-Date
- Live Concert

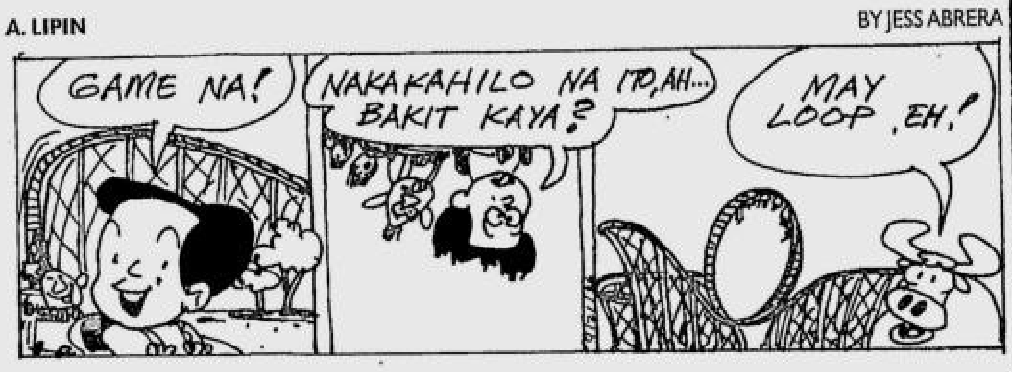
BAYO CONVERSE bench/ HUMAN TOBY'S THE BODY SHOP CHARLES BLVD glorietta AyalaMalls

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

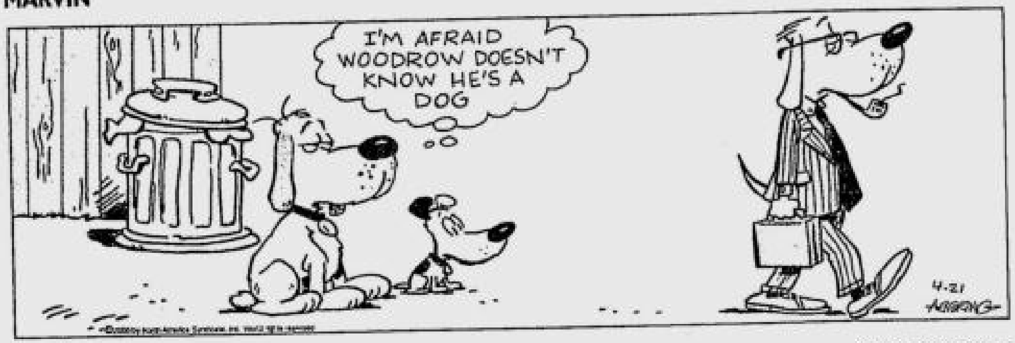
FOXTROT
BY BILL AMEND


I FOUND THIS COOL ONLINE CHESS SERVICE.
IT ASSESSES YOUR PLAY AND MATCHES YOU WITH WORTHY OPPONENTS AROUND THE WORLD.
TIMMY@SMITHVILLE-PRESCHOOL CHALLENGES YOU TO A GAME.
I HEAR THE GRANDMASTERS LIKE TO USE ALIASES.
GOOD LUCK.

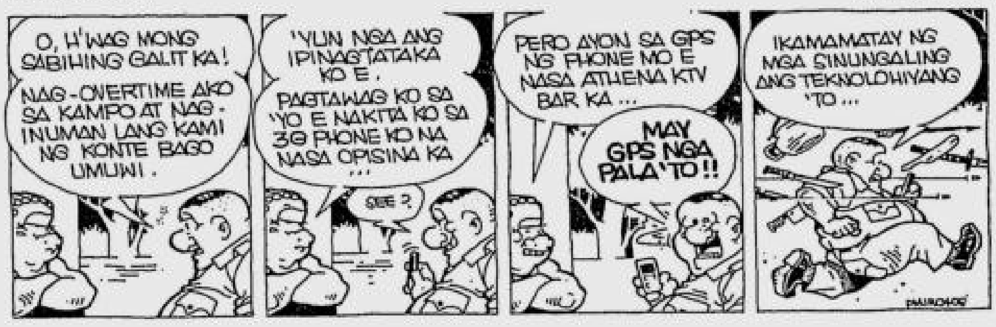
A. LIPIN
BY JESS ABRERA


GAME NA!
NAKAKAHILO NA ITO, AH... BAKIT KAYA?
MAY LOOP, EH!

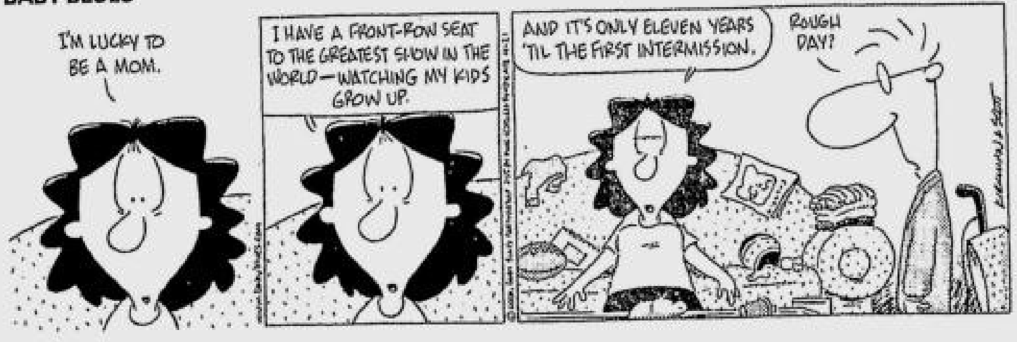
MARVIN
BY TOM ARMSTRONG


I'M AFRAID WOODROW DOESN'T KNOW HE'S A DOG
4-21

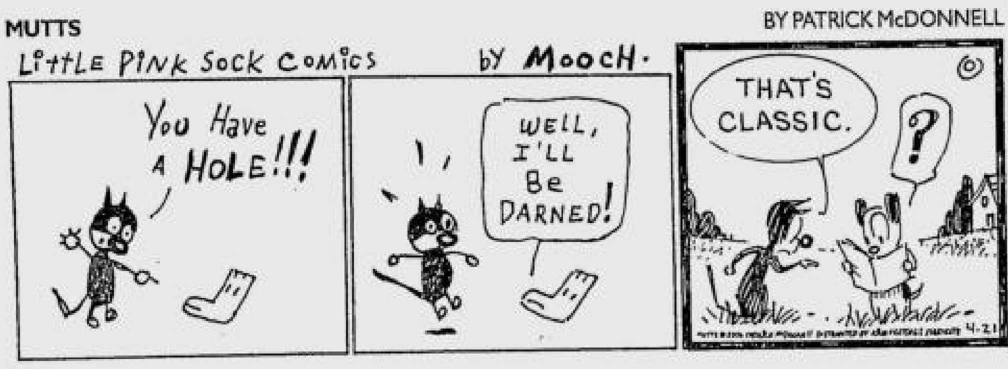
PUGAD BABOY
BY P.M. JUNIOR


O, H'WAG MONG SABIHING GALIT KA!
NAG-OVERTIME AKO SA KAMPO AT NAG-INUMAN LANG KAMI NG KONTE BAGO UMUWI.
'YUN NGA ANG IPINAGTATAKA KO E.
PAGTAWAG KO SA 'YO E NAKITA KO SA 3G PHONE KO NA NASA OPISINA KA ...
SEE?
PERO AYON SA GPS NG PHONE MO E NASA ATHENA KTV BAR KA ...
MAY GPS NGA PALA 'TO!!
IKAMAMATAY NG MGA SINUNGALING ANG TEKNOLOHIYANG 'TO ...

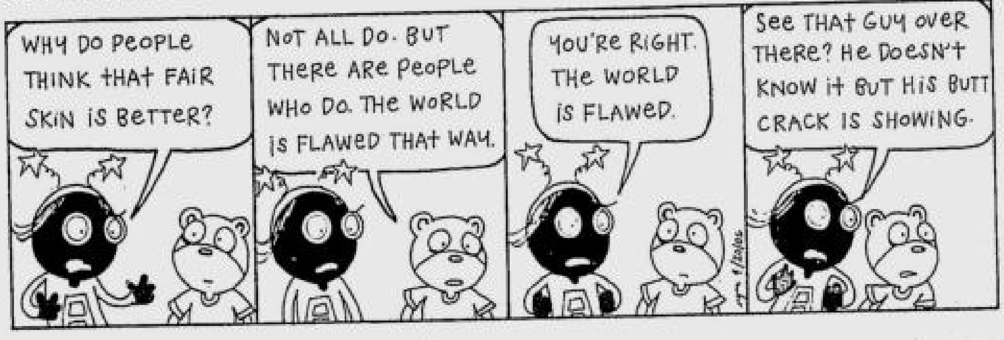
BABY BLUES
BY JERRY SCOTT


I'M LUCKY TO BE A MOM.
I HAVE A FRONT-ROW SEAT TO THE GREATEST SHOW IN THE WORLD—WATCHING MY KIDS GROW UP.
AND IT'S ONLY ELEVEN YEARS 'TIL THE FIRST INTERMISSION.
ROUGH DAY?

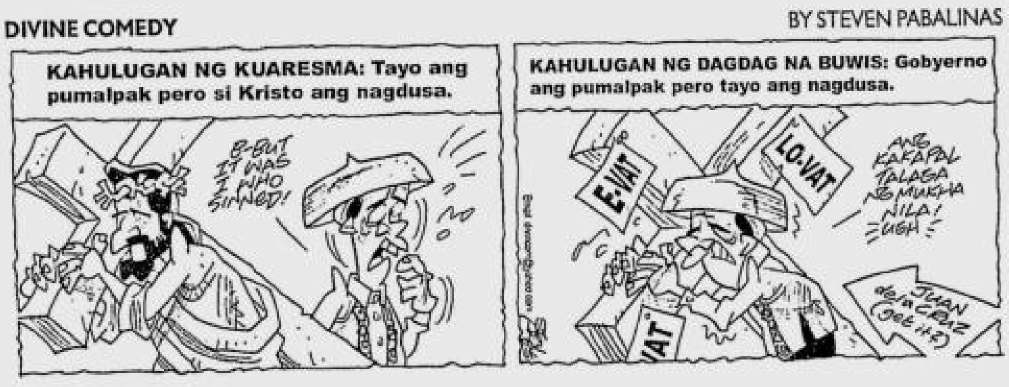
MUTTS
BY PATRICK McDONNELL


LITTLE PINK SOCK COMICS by MOOCH.
YOU HAVE A HOLE!!!
WELL, I'LL BE DARNED!
THAT'S CLASSIC.
?
4-21

ATOMO AND WEBOY
BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WHY DO PEOPLE THINK THAT FAIR SKIN IS BETTER?
NOT ALL DO. BUT THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO DO. THE WORLD IS FLAWED THAT WAY.
YOU'RE RIGHT. THE WORLD IS FLAWED.
SEE THAT GUY OVER THERE? HE DOESN'T KNOW IT BUT HIS BUTT CRACK IS SHOWING.

DIVINE COMEDY
BY STEVEN PABALINAS


KAHULUGAN NG KUARESMA: Tayo ang pumalpak pero si Kristo ang nagdusa.
B-BUT IT WAS I WHO SINNED!
KAHULUGAN NG DAGDAG NA BUWIS: Gobyerno ang pumalpak pero tayo ang nagdusa.
E-VAT
LO-VAT
VAT
ANG KAKAPAL TALAGA NG MUKHA NILA! UGH!
JUAN dela CRUZ (see it?)

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: No matter how bold you are (and you can be bold), you present a careful, judicious mask to the world. Not only are you clever and well-educated (even if self-taught), you're extremely capable. You have the original daring of Aries and the sensual practicality of Taurus. You handle authority well. The year ahead is social, fun-loving and wonderful for relationships.

Birthdate of: Elaine May, writer/director; Andie Macdowell, actress; Queen Elizabeth II, British monarch.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Now your focus turns to money, possessions and your financial state of affairs. You want to get things straightened out here. No more loose ends.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): With the Sun now in your sign, it's your turn to recharge your batteries for the rest of the year. Put yourself first now. It's all about you for the next four weeks!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Try to get some time by yourself in the next few weeks. You need this. You have a lot to think about. As your birthday approaches, think about what you want your next year to hold.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Your popularity is going to rise in the next few weeks. Accept all invitations. Enjoy the company of others. Join clubs and organizations.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Others notice you in the month ahead. That's because the Sun is at the top of your chart. You make a great impression on important people now.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Do something out of the ordinary. You want adventure. You also want to learn something new. Basically, you want to experience the world!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Superficial explanations will not satisfy you now. You want to get to the nitty-gritty truth. The month ahead is excellent for research.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Partnerships and close friendships are a strong focus in the next few weeks. You can learn a lot about yourself by observing how you relate to loved ones.

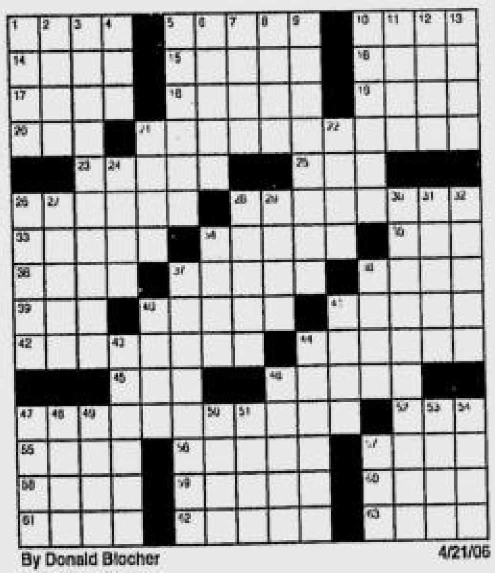
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You have energy to burn! You want to get better organized. Therefore, tidy closets, install shelves, paint, clean and buy what you need to do a good job.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You're entering one of the most playful months of the year for your sign. Love, romance, sports, the theater, the arts and vacations are your strong focus. Enjoy!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Home, family and all things domestic are your primary concern now and in the month ahead. Talk to family members. Tackle home projects. Make your home more cozy and inviting.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Prepare for a busy month ahead! Short trips, busy errands and increased study, reading and writing keep you hopping. In addition, many people want to talk to now!

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Donald Blocher
Arlington, TX

4/21/06

ACROSS
1 Royal Peruvian
5 Alphabetizes
10 Computer info
14 Audition for a part
15 Fine-tune
16 Showy bloom
17 Beheaded Boleyn
18 Boredom
19 Hiking housing
20 Actor Beatty
21 Ocarina
23 Swerved off course
25 Rene Auberjonois role
26 Pregnant
28 Really big
33 Transplant, as a plant
34 Lower in spirits
35 E.T.'s vehicle
36 Armchair athlete's channel
37 Lawn
38 The work week is over!
39 Moray __
40 Point of view
41 Map
42 Making a weak, chirping sound
44 Stock items
45 Boxer's punch
46 In an upright position
47 Ratel
52 Unser and Kaline
55 Clapton or Carmen
56 Keep clear of
57 June 6, 1944
58 Wild speech
59 Passover feast
60 Husband of Frigg
61 Billfold bills
62 Across: pref.
63 Bronte governess Jane

DOWN
1 Iraq's neighbor
2 Oahu goose
3 Bright red color
4 Fruit juice drink
5 Three sheets to the wind
6 Had title to
7 Philosopher Descartes
8 Tightly stretched
9 T-bar totes
10 Marks meaning repeat
11 Domain
12 Add color to
13 Concerning
21 Loretta of "M*A*S*H"
22 Olfactory offense
24 Stratford's river
26 Welcome
27 Stitch again
28 Loud, resonant, metallic sound
29 Kick out
30 Gold digger's meal ticket
31 Fully in flames
32 Garrets
34 Grain husks
37 Most smooth-tongued
38 Holier-__-thou
40 Stick around
41 "Mask" star
43 Tosses out
44 Exhibits scorn
46 Versifier Nash
47 Big sandwich
48 Algerian port
49 Upside-down six
50 Affirm
51 Arp's art
53 Den
54 Ago in Scotland
57 Unknown John

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

S	H	A	L	L	■	W	A	K	E	■	J	O	S	S
C	I	L	I	A	■	O	W	E	N	■	O	B	I	E
A	G	E	N	T	■	O	A	T	S	■	L	E	S	T
T	H	E	D	I	F	F	I	C	U	L	T	Y	I	S
■	■	■	A	N	O	■	T	H	E	E	■	■	■	■
C	A	P	■	O	R	G	■	■	D	A	N	G	L	E
A	D	I	A	■	A	R	G	O	■	R	E	R	A	N
N	O	T	B	U	Y	I	N	G	O	N	T	I	M	E
A	B	O	U	T	■	P	U	R	R	■	S	E	A	M
L	E	N	T	I	L	■	■	E	O	S	■	F	R	Y
■	■	■	■	C	A	B	S	■	N	I	A	■	■	■
I	T	S	P	A	Y	I	N	G	O	N	T	I	M	E
N	A	P	E	■	O	L	E	O	■	G	R	O	A	N
C	L	U	E	■	U	L	A	N	■	L	I	N	G	O
H	E	R	R	■	T	Y	K	E	■	E	A	S	E	L

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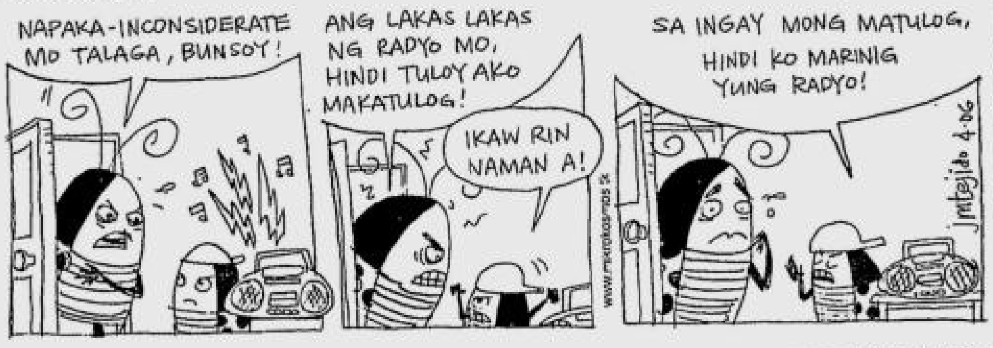
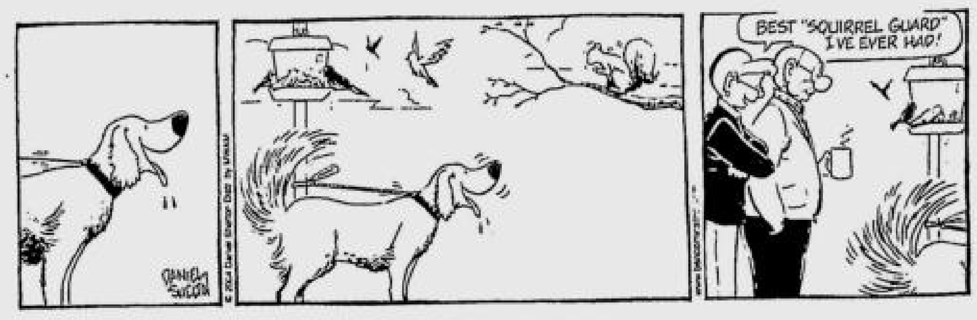
4/21/06

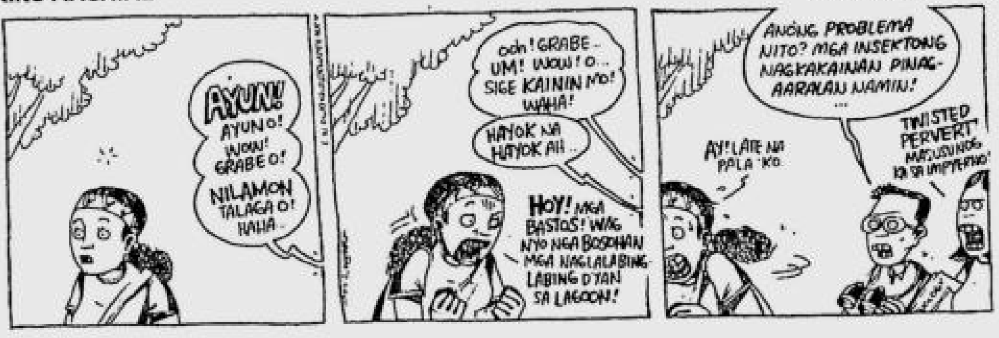
MIKROKOSMOS
BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


NAPAKA-INCONSIDERATE MO TALAGA, BUNSOY!
ANG LAKAS LAKAS NG RADYO MO, HINDI TULOY AKO MAKATULOG!
IKAW RIN NAMAN A!
SA INGAY MONG MATULOG, HINDI KO MARINIG YUNG RADYO!
jmtejido 4-06

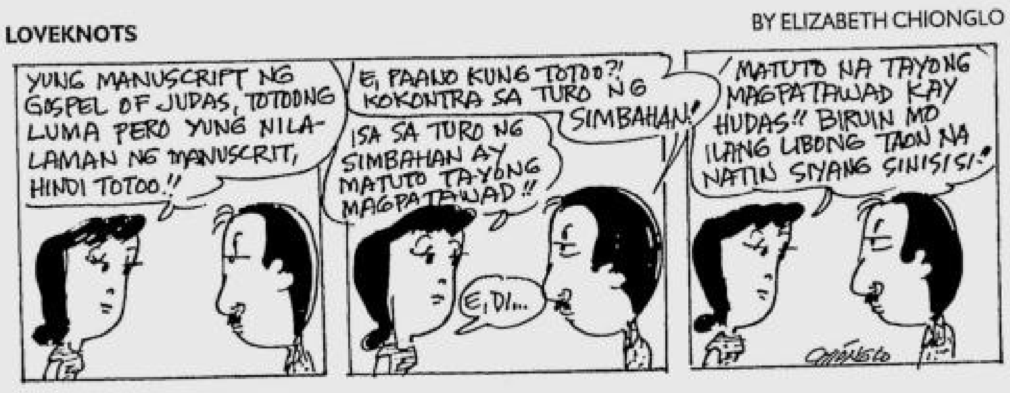
BEN
BY DANIEL SHELTON


BEST "SQUIRREL GUARD" I'VE EVER HAD!

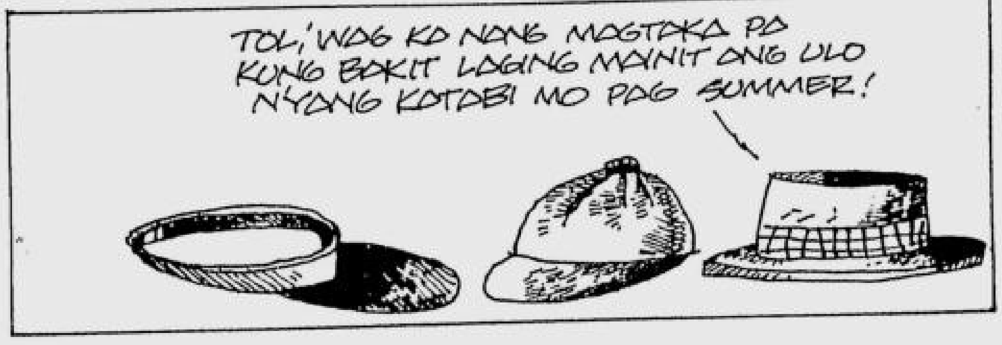
KIKO MACHINE
BY MANIX ABRERA


AYUN! AYUN O! WOW! GRABE O! NILAMON TALAGA O! HAHA...
OOH! GRABE-UM! WOW! O... SIGE KAININ MO! WAHA!
HAYOK NA HAYOK AH...
HOY! MGA BASTOS! WAG NYO NGA BOSOHAN MGA NAGLALABING-LABING D'YAN SA LAGOON!
ANONG PROBLEMA NITO? MGA INSEKTONG NAGKAKAINAN PINAG-AARALAN NAMIN! ...
AY! LATE NA PALA KO.
TWISTED PERVERT MASUSUNOG KA SA IMPYERNO!

LOVEKNOTS
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


YUNG MANUSCRIPT NG GOSPEL OF JUDAS, TOTOONG LUMA PERO YUNG NILALAMAN NG MANUSCRIT, HINDI TOTOO!!
E, PAANO KUNG TOTOO?! KOKONTRA SA TURO NG SIMBAHAN!
ISA SA TURO NG SIMBAHAN AY MATUTO TAYONG MAGPATAWAD!!
E, DI...
MATUTO NA TAYONG MAGPATAWAD KAY HUDAS!! BIRUIN MO ILANG LIBONG TAON NA NATIN SIYANG SINISISI!

TULDOK
BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


TOL, 'WAG KA NANG MAGTAKA PA KUNG BAKIT LAGING MAINIT ANG ULO NYANG KATABI MO PAG SUMMER!

Cesare for Writers' Night @ Conspiracy: 'Minimalism is for wimps'

SHOW TIME

ART AND LITERARY ICONOCLAST Cesare A.X. Syjuco is the special featured performer for "Writers' Night" at the Conspiracy Garden Cafe on April 25, 7 to 9 p.m.

Once regarded as "the Golden Boy of Philippines Art," the multi-awarded Cesare is equally known for his reclusive nature and for his daring experimental works.

Aptly titled "Cesare: A Noise From Underground," the Conspiracy date is one of a series of small venue performances that preludes the release of the artist's CD album and book next month. The 15-track album showcases Cesare's prize-winning avant-garde poetry and music.

Also performing on Tuesday is Cesare's youngest daughter, 20-year-old poet and fictionist Maxine Syjuco. The eclectic event is being organized by UP Writing Director Carmela "Vim" Nadera.

"I'm basically just a brooding poet… but a very loud one," Cesare says of his poetry performances. "No matter how wild I play in a record album, it's never going to be loud enough to break windows and wipe the grins off people's faces."

He will be performing one of the poems from his new album while playing solo electric guitar on a modified ESP Hybrid plugged into a barrage of high-volume "garage band" amplifiers.

"It's going to be a short and fast piece… like improv jazz on steroids. But I don't think anyone's going home thinking of it as something minimalistic," says the TOYM awardee. "Minimalism is for wimps."

CESARE Syjuco

Tonight

Earthday Jam at Times Square, Araneta Center with Akafellas, Ang4gettables, Lou Bonnevie, Pinikpikan, Paolo Santos, Noelle Cassandra, Radioactive Sago Project, Pupil, Kitchie Nadal, Rocksteddy, Francis M and Barbie Almalbis

Winston in Concert featuring True Faith and The Dawn at Party Place in San Fernando, Pampanga

RJ 'n Friends with the Members Band at RJ Guitar Bar, Jupiter St., Makati

9th Avenue at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3

K and The Boxers at Ratsky Morato

Frenchie Dy at Ratsky Malate

Tomorrow

Kuh Ledesma and Bobby Soul of The Platters at the Captain's Bar of Mandarin Oriental

"Festival Dance" at Enchanted Kingdom, Sta. Rosa Laguna; 4:30 p.m.

Ogie Alcasid and Lovi at Ratsky Malate

True Faith and The Dawn at Cal Jam in Olongapo City

BJ "Tolits" Forbes

Rage at Ratsky Morato

Kamikazee at Starmall Edsa; 4 p.m.

Mr. God and Company at RJ Guitar Bar, Jupiter St., Makati

Tribe of Levi at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3

Flintstones and the Gang at Merk's

Jed Madela at SM Makati

April 23

Katrina Halili at Metropolis Star Alabang; 4 p.m.

AiAi Delas Alas' Maggi Magic Sarap Palengke Tour at Naga Public Market

Join the Club at Robinson's Place Imus

BJ "Tolits" Forbes at SM Bacoor

April 24

Michael Terry at RJ Guitar Bar, Jupiter St., Makati

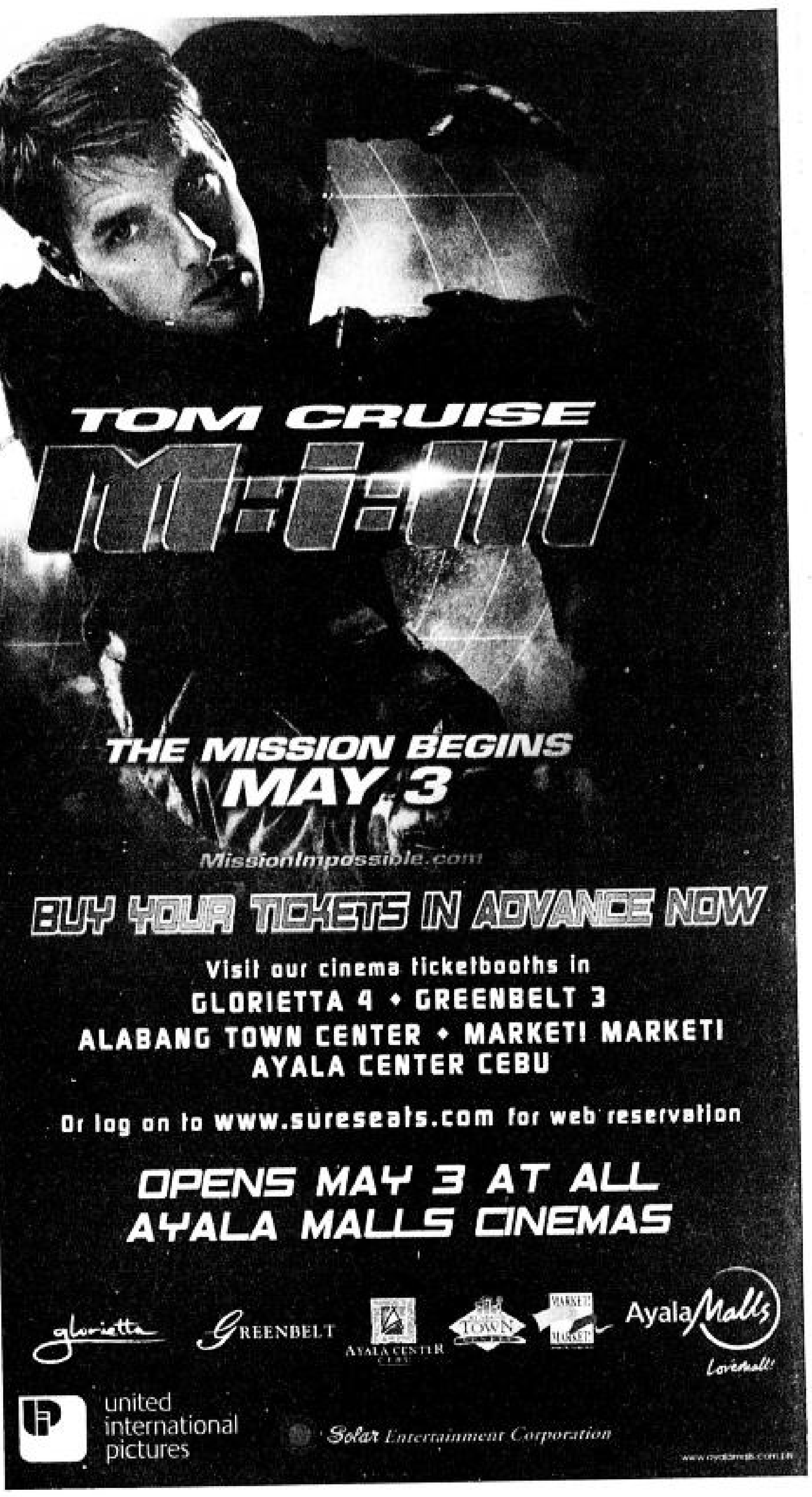
Strings of Soul and Michaelangelo at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3

April 25

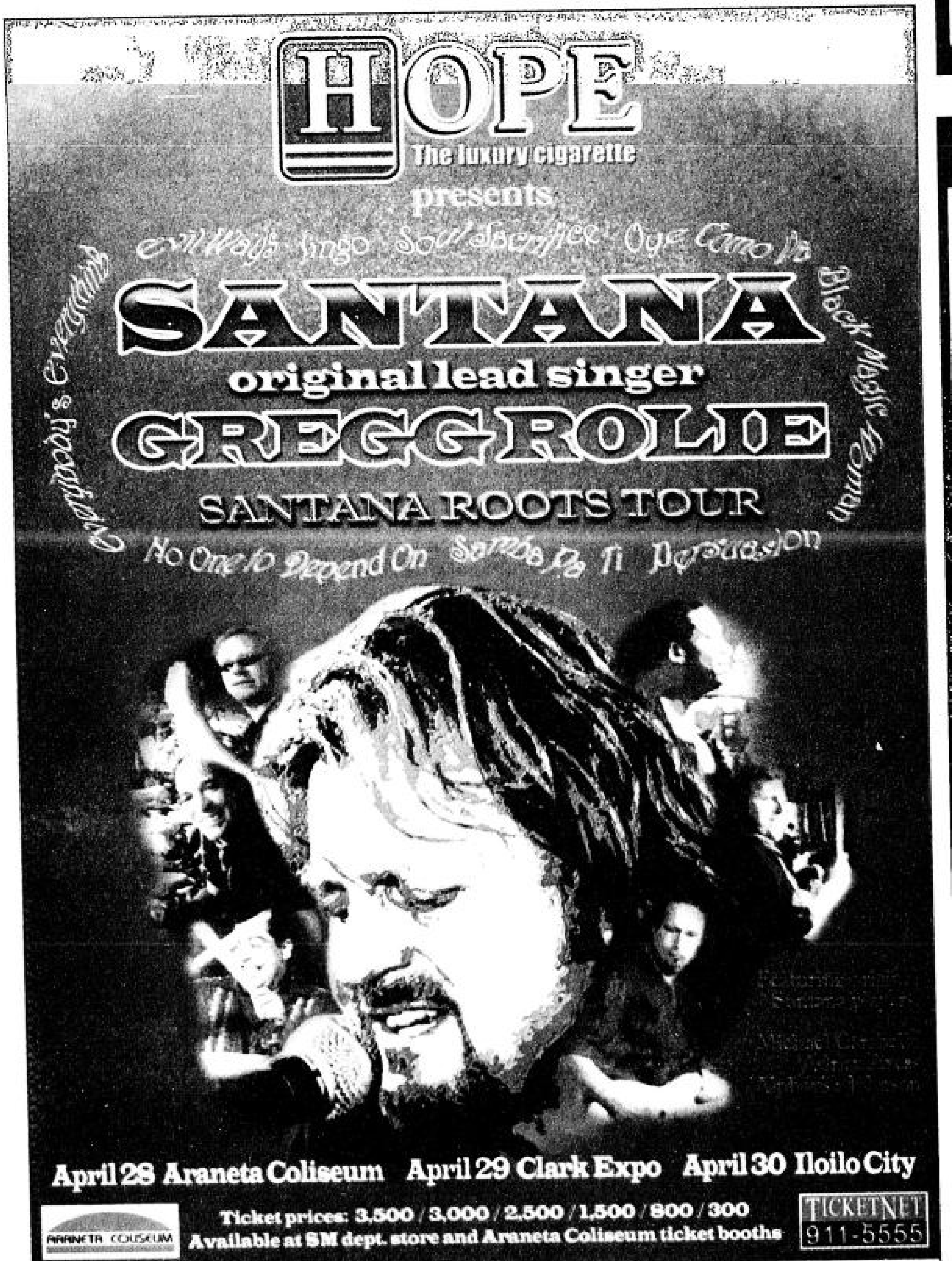
Michael Terry at RJ Guitar Bar, Jupiter St., Makati

THE ADVENTURE BEGINS APRIL 26!
A WHOLE NEW BREED OF TOURIST.
THE WILD
Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

NEW YORK OR BUST



TOM CRUISE
M:i:III
THE MISSION BEGINS MAY 3
MissionImpossible.com
BUY YOUR TICKETS IN ADVANCE NOW
Visit our cinema ticketbooths in
GLORIETTA 4 • GREENBELT 3
ALABANG TOWN CENTER • MARKET! MARKET!
AYALA CENTER CEBU
Or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservation
OPENS MAY 3 AT ALL AYALA MALLS CINEMAS
glorietta GREENBELT AYALA CENTER CEBU TOWN MARKET! MARKET! Ayala Malls Lovemall!
united international pictures
Solar Entertainment Corporation



HOPE
The luxury cigarette
presents
SANTANA
original lead singer
GREGG ROLIE
SANTANA ROOTS TOUR
April 28 Araneta Coliseum April 29 Clark Expo April 30 Iloilo City
ARANETA COLISEUM
Ticket prices: 3,500 / 3,000 / 2,500 / 1,500 / 800 / 300
Available at SM dept. store and Araneta Coliseum ticket booths
TICKETNET 911-5555

Government Warning:
Cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health.

Evil Ways
Jingo
Soul Sacrifice
Oye Como Va
Black Magic Woman
Everybody's Everything
No One to Depend On
Samba Pa Ti
Persuasion

ARANETA CENTER
Gateway ALIMALL FarmersPlaza
a street party music tribute to mother earth
Earth Day Jam 2006
Featuring
BARBIE ALMALBIS • KITCHIE NADAL
RADIOACTIVE SAGO PROJECT • ROCKSTEDDY
and many more!
FREE ADMISSION
APRIL 21 / 7PM / TIMES SQUARE / ARANETA CENTER
For ticket inquiries, please call TicketNet at 911-5555 or log on to www.ticketnet.com.ph
THE ONLY CINEPLEX IN THE COUNTRY
Gateway CINEPLEX*10
DOLBY DIGITAL-EX

SUBMERGED 12:00 / 2:25 / 4.50 / 7.15 / 9:40	D' LUCKY ONES 12:40 / 2:55 / 5:10 / 7:25 / 9.40	TRISTAN & ISOLDE 1:50 / 4:30 / 7:10 / 9:50	GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA
MOMENTS OF LOVE 12:30 / 2:50 / 5:10 / 7:30 / 9.50	ICE AGE 2 12:40 / 2:50 / 5:00 / 7:10 / 9:20	BASIC INSTINCT 2 12:30 / 2:50 / 5:10 / 7:30 / 9:50	EIGHT BELOW 1:20 / 3:50 / 6:20 / 8:50
AMERICAN SOLDIERS 12:50 / 3:00 / 5:10 / 7:20 / 9:30	PAMAHIIN 1:05 / 3:15 / 5.25 / 7:35 / 9:45	EIGHT BELOW 2:00 / 4:30 / 7:00 / 9:30	ONLY P120 ADMISSION GLOBE PLATINUM P249/P299

ALIMALL CINEMAS

1	D' LUCKY ONES 12:10 R3 / 1:45 / 4:00 / 6:15 / 8:30	2	PAMAHIIN 12:00 / 2:10 / 4:20 / 6:30 / 8:40	6	SUBMERGED 12:15 R4 / 1:40 / 4:05 / 6:30 / 8.55
4	MOMENTS OF LOVE 12:00 R3 / 1:40 / 4:00 / 6:20 / 8:40	5	EIGHT BELOW 12:25 / 2:55 / 5:25 / 7:55		DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

LOG ON TO WWW.ARANETACENTER.NET FOR MORE DETAILS OR TO SUBSCRIBE TO OUR WEEKLY E-MAIL ENTERTAINMENT UPDATES
ARANETA COLISEUM
PBA PHILIPPINE CUP
pr 23, 4:10 TALK N TEXT vs SAN MIGUEL
un. 6:30 COCA COLA vs AIR 21 EXPRESS
SANTANA ROOTS... GREG ROLIE LIVE!
APRIL 28, Friday 8 pm

ENTERTAINMENT

Miriam Quiambao, minus the hubby

RUSHES

HONG KONG-BASED BEAUTY QUEEN Miriam Quiambao spent Holy Week in Vigan, Ilocos Sur, minus her Italian businessman hubby, Claudio Rondineli.

The *morena* stunner was often seen taking lots of pictures. "It seems photography is her new hobby," said an eyewitness. "People had snapshots taken with her, too."

MIRIAM Quiambao: Snapshots of a Holy Week break, solo.

HEART and Echo: Whew, hot!

Black Saturday, sun tan day

Hot couple Jericho Rosales and Heart Evangelista hit the waves in San Juan, La Union during the holidays. The two were spotted getting a tan on Black Saturday near Echo's beach-front property.

He wore a veil

Comedian John Lapus joined the Good Friday procession in Dinalupihan, Bataan, with some friends. John is said to have worn a veil to avoid catching too much attention. By the way, there's no truth to the rumor that John is playing the role of Dawn front man Jett Pangan in a forthcoming indie movie.

JOHN and Jet: Separated at birth?

Baby due in May

Donita Rose is hosting the fifth season of GMA 7's cooking show, "Mobile Kusina," starting today, taking over chores for Christine Jacob-Sandejas who is scheduled to give birth next month.

All about bodies

Some babes with the best bods are still in Boracay. At least three of them—Mylene Dizon, Nancy Castiliogne and Reema Chanco—are not out there just to show off their curves. They're crew members for the Nestlé Fit In fitness fest, ongoing till tomorrow. Mylene will give belly dancing lessons; Reema, cardio boxing; Nancy, hip hop aerobics. *Hip hop aerobics*?

Favorite ex-husband

Hollywood actress Jane Fonda just came back from a trip to Argentina with former husband Ted Turner. They remain close, she told Associated Press in Atlanta. "He's my favorite ex-husband."

NANCY Castiglione for hip hop aerobics.

REEMA Chanco for cardio boxing.

MYLENE Dizon for belly dancing.

JANE Fonda, formerly Turner AP

"THAT's So Raven" on Disney Channel

Slade back on 'Titans'

KID FIT

THEY'RE COOL. THEY'RE HOT.

Whichever way you put it, these shows are meant to make the sizzling summer just a little bit more bearable for children:

- **"Power Rangers Dino Thunder."** starts April 30, 7:30 a.m., then weekends on Cartoon Network. A new team, Power Rangers Dino Thunder battles a new menace on earth.
- **"Acceleracers: Grand Pix."** More action weekends starting April 29, with "Ignition"; May 6, "The Speed of Silence"; May 13, "Breaking Point"; May 20, "Ultimate Race." Also on Cartoon Network.
- **"That's So Raven."** Season 4 starts tomorrow, 6:30 p.m. on Disney Channel. Raven Baxter finds herself in all sorts of funny situations—as usual.
- **"The Incredibles."** Premieres on Disney Channel tomorrow, 7:30 p.m. An action-packed animated adventure about superheroes led by Bob Parr and his wife Helen. A mysterious communication orders Bob to a remote island for a top-secret assignment.
- **"Pokemon."** Premiered on Cartoon Network on April 12. Catch Ash Ketchum and his Pokemon, Pikachu on Toonami, weeknights at 7:30 p.m.
- **"The Simpsons."** First time on Cartoon Network anywhere in the world. Tune-in weeknights, 7:30 p.m., on Toonami for double episodes.
- **"Teen Titans: The End."** Premieres tomorrow, 7 p.m., on Cartoon Network; encore on Sunday, 11 a.m. Slade is back from the dead, stronger than ever, and launches an attack on the Teen Titans.

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River Maya (Apr. 7) Center For Pop (Apr. 23) Kamikazee (Apr. 22) Starmall Edsa

PRINT AND RADIO CAN BOOST YOUR MARKETING PLAN

Re-discover the power of print and radio. Come to the PANA Mediafest. A 2-day media fair on just how effective and efficient print and radio advertising can be. Advertisers, ad agencies, academe and students are invited. Admission is free. April 20-21, 10 AM to 7 PM at the Ground Floor, Old Makati Stock Exchange Building, (Beside Ayala Tower One) Ayala Avenue, Makati City. Hosted by the Philippine Association of National Advertisers, in cooperation with United Print Media Group and the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas (Radio Sector).

For more details contact: The PANA Secretariat
Unit 2D Torre de Salcedo, 184 Salcedo St., Legaspi Village, Makati City
Tel. No.: 894-0474 to 75; 894-0012 to 13 or email to email@pana.com.ph

PROGRAM

DAY 1 (April 20, Thursday)
1:00 pm to 2:00 pm – Role of Radio in the Advertising Media Mix
2:00 pm to 3:00 pm – Harnessing the Power of Radio

DAY 2 (April 21, Friday)
12:30 pm to 1:15 pm – The Print Advertising Process By: Mr. Gary Libby, VP for IT and Prepress, Phil. Daily Inquirer
1:15 pm to 2:00 pm – What Print Can Deliver for Clients; Successful Companies Which Grew Substantially Because of Print By: Ms. Hermie de Leon, President & CEO, Mediawise
2:00 pm to 2:45 pm – The Power or Unique Properties of Print By: Liezl Maralag, Managing Director, Starcom

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"This signifies the birth of a new horror director here in the Philippines." -Philip Cu-Unjieng, Philippine Star columnist & Marketing Director of ABS-CBN Publishing
"Dennis Trillo gives a stellar performance and Jaclyn Jose arrives later in the film to give her most subtly creepy performance yet." - Quark Henares, award-winning director
"It's a quality film from Regal Entertainment and Rahyan Carlos. Congratulations!" -Wilma Galvante, Senior Vice President of Entertainment TV Group GMA Network, Inc.
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Q1 budget gap lower than expected

Strong revenue collection offset high spending in first 3 months

By Michelle V. Remo

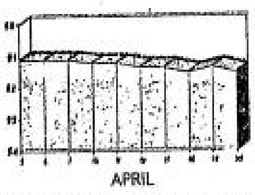
THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT'S BUDGET DEFICIT STOOD lower than what was programmed for the first quarter of the year, hitting only P67.6 billion compared with the expected P71.8-billion ceiling on account of strong revenue collection.

The Bureau of the Treasury yesterday announced that expenditures for the first three months of the year reached P272.6 billion, or higher than the P263.5-billion target. But National Treasurer Omar Cruz said the overspending was offset by higher-than-expected revenues, which hit P205 billion compared with the program of only P191.7 billion.

Cruz said the high spending in the first quarter was due largely to the advance

Q1 BUDGET/ B4

INDICATORS



CURRENCIES

P51.495 = $1 — As of 5 p.m., April 20, 2006

¥117.59 = $1 — As of 5 p.m., April 20, 2006

GOLD: **$623.00-623.50**

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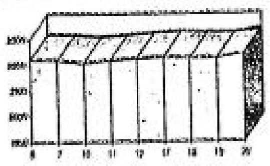
STOCK MARKET



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Shares close 0.86% higher

SHARE PRICES YESTERDAY ROSE 0.86 PERCENT TO their highest levels in more than six years, dealers said.

The composite index rose 19.03 points to 2,242.76, the high for day and off a low of 2,215.18.

SHARES/ B3

World oil rates to stay volatile, warns IMF

By Doris C. Dumlao

OIL PRICES ARE LIKELY TO REMAIN high and volatile in the near future, weighing down on equities and exchange rates in oil-importing countries like the Philippines, an International Monetary Fund report warned.

But over the longer term, consumer countries may learn to cope with oil shocks much better, depending on the government's policies and on the viability of alternative technologies.

"Many alternative energy sources that

WORLD/ B2

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Ginebra income sinks to ₱368M

SMC hard liquor unit hit hard by rising costs, weak demand

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

RISING COSTS AND WEAKENing demand for hard liquor sent the income of Ginebra San Miguel Inc. sinking to P368 million last year from P1.72 billion in 2004.

Ginebra said in a report to the Securities and Exhcnage Commission that due to lower sales volumes, revenues dropped to P10.24 billion last year from P13.04 billion in 2004.

The sales performance of main brands Ginebra San Miguel and Chinese rice wine Vino Kulafu was below expectations.

Cost of sales fell 14.2 percent to P7.2 billion from last year's P8.44 billion due to lower volumes.

This yielded a gross profit of P2.99 billion last year from P4.6 billion in 2004.

Interest and financing charges ate a big chunk of the revenues, with costs increasing five times to P279.5 million from P58.4 million as short-term borrowings swelled.

The bulk of the financing charges was in the form of interest on notes payables or unsecured short-term peso loans sourced from local banks for working capital requirements.

Interest on notes payables ballooned to P276.4 million in 2005 from P28 million in 2004.

Total notes payables increased to P5.4 billion from P1.28 billion due to a loan incurred for working capital.

With lower sales and higher costs, income from GSMI's continuing operations after paying taxes was P430 million, from the previous year's P2 billion.

Losses from discontinued operations amounted to P65 million last year due to additional provisions related to receivables from the sale of the company's non-liquor business.

Ginebra said in its report to the SEC that the past year was "a period of adjustment" to an evolving liquor market, increasing costs and soft consumer demand.

The company said it was focusing on reshaping and diversifying its portfolio to strengthen its business and ensure sustainable performance.

GSMI said it hiked prices to compensate for the increase in costs and a 30-percent hike in excise tax, but it was not enough to offset rising costs.

One bright spot was the impressive showing of its Gran Matador brandy, which recorded a seven-fold rise in volume. Grand Matador brandy now accounts for 20 percent of Ginebra's total volume and 22 percent of total revenues.

In 2005, GSMI launched Solera Gran Reserva, an upscale version of Gran Matador.

In 2001, San Miguel reorganized its local non-alcoholic beverage business by selling its water and juice businesses to affiliates. In line with this, the company wrote off trade receivables deemed uncollectible from its divested non-liquor business.

Last year, the company spent P405 million for capital expenditures, the bulk of which was spent on operations improvements, upgrading and repairs of bottling plants.

SMC to list $300M in hybrid securities

SAN MIGUEL CAPITAL FUNDing Ltd., a special purpose vehicle of food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp., plans to list its proposed $300 million in hybrid securities on the Singapore Stock Exchange.

This is part of a plan to sell a rare type of shares to foreign investors, according to sources who attended the company's Manila roadshow yesterday.

The hybrid securities, dubbed a benchmark size offering of perpetual non-cumulative, non-voting preferred shares, is a mix of equity and debt.

The offering will be the first of its kind in Asia.

The preferred shares will pay a fixed return to be set later.

The hybrid securities will allow San Miguel to raise equity without diluting common shareholders and without increasing the debt in its books.

The hybrid issue will be marketed to investors in Singapore and Hong Kong today, Geneva on Monday and London on Tuesday.

The proposed issue will be used to repay existing bank loans, San Miguel president Ramon S. Ang said yesterday.

"This is a once in a lifetime opportunity. San Miguel will never miss an obligation to any lender," Ang told investors yesterday.

He also stressed that San Miguel continues to enjoy "very strong cash flow."

Sources separately said that the company may use proceeds raised from the hybrid issue to fund working capital and to take advantage of opportunities for more acquisitions.

Four foreign banks—Citigroup Global Markets Ltd., Credit Suisse Securities (Europe) Ltd., Deutsche Bank AG, Singapore Branch, and The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corp. Ltd. were tapped as joint bookrunners and lead managers for the offering. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

Jollibee reorganizes

JOLLIBEE FOODS CORP., THE country's biggest fast food network, instituted changes in its management to accelerate sales and profit growth and strengthen corporate governance, the company said in a disclosure to regulators.

JFC said it appointed a general manager for Red Ribbon Bakeshop Philippines and Red Ribbon Bakeshop USA and hired new top level executives and assigned key personnel to new positions.

JFC chair and chief executive officer Tony Tan Caktiong said these changes were part of a "broader organization transformation" required to meet long-term goals.

"We have ambitious long-term goals. We need to make big changes within our organization to make them possible," Tan Caktiong said.

As part of these changes, JFC announced the following appointments:

Regina B. Navarrete will be appointed president and general manager of Red Ribbon Bakeshop Philippines effective July 1.

Navarrete was general manager of Greenwich Pizza Corp. for four years before her new appointment.

Daniel Moran, currently chief executive officer of Red Ribbon, will continue to serve as president of Red Ribbon Bakeshop USA, while retaining his position as CEO of the entire Red Ribbon business.

He will focus his efforts on expanding the Red Ribbon business in the United States including the start-up of the new commissary in the Los Angeles area and the entry into the East Coast within the year.

Moran was one of the founders of Red Ribbon and has been its chief executive since 1997.

Erwin M. Elechicon, who joined the Jollibee Group in January this year, was named president of Greenwich effective April 1, succeeding Navarrete.

Lenard Berba, who joined the Jollibee Group in December 2005, had been appointed corporate strategy director, a new position tasked to prepare strategies for entry into new foreign markets. Navarrete, Moran, Elechicon and Berba are members of the executive committee of the Jollibee Group and report to Tan Caktiong.

Elizabeth L. Sanchez

World ...

From page B1

were not economically and technologically feasible during the high oil price episode of the 1970s are now viable," the IMF said in a report released yesterday.

Countries highly dependent on oil imports, such as the Philippines, were also urged to improve their taxation policies to better ease energy demand adjustment over the long haul.

One such policy, the IMF suggested, would be to impose a producer emissions fee for vehicle owners or operators that would cover all energy sources.

With such a policy, actual fuel charges are expected to ease. In the Philippines, however, a Department of Finance official yesterday said it would be difficult to find a lawmaker willing to sponsor such a bill.

The IMF also said mandatory mix requirements on the use of alternative fuel may help spur demand.

With crude oil consumption somewhat lower than expected in 2005, prices are being driven by concerns on future supply, brought on by nuclear developments in Iran, trouble in Iraq, as well as threats to oil production in Nigeria.

THE PESO EXCHANGE RATE:
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SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES — 21 APRIL / FRIDAY
10:00 AM – 10:30 AM Demo by the Gymnastics Association of the Phils.
10:30 AM – 11:30 AM Davao Energy Seminar
11:30 AM – 12:30 PM Clark Development Presentation
12:30 PM – 01:00 PM English is Cool Game
01:00 PM – 02:00 PM Citigroup's Career Talk
02:00 PM – 03:00 PM Standard Immigration Seminar
03:00 PM – 04:00 PM Asian Hospital Presentation: Women's Health Speaker: Dr. Eileen Manalo
04:00 PM – 04:30 PM English is Cool game
05:00 PM – 05:30 PM St. Luke's Medical Center Presentation
05:30 PM – 06:00 PM Beta Central Presentation
06:00 PM – 07:00 PM People Support Career Talk & AVP: Essential English Comm. in the Global Workplace – From the BPO Perspective Speaker: Gus Bengzon, Training Mgr. People Support University

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of April 20, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.95	3.95	3.7	3.7	4,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	34.5	34.5	34	34.5	163,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	61.5	62	61	62	327,200
China Banking Corp.	750	770	750	770	780
Citystate Savings Bank	19.75	19.75	19.75	19.75	300
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.51	0.51	0.5	0.5	1,200,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	70.5	71.5	70.5	71.5	122,700
International Exch. Bank	32	32.5	32	32.5	19,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	38.5	39	38.5	39	303,600
Philippine National Bank	34	34	34	34	88,900
Phil. Savings Bank	37	37.5	37	37.5	12,500
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	74,000
Security Bank Corp.	47	47	47	47	26,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	38.5	40	38.5	40	14,800
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Bankard Inc.	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	70,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	27.5	28	27.5	28	6,600
Manulife Financial Corp.	3250	3250	3250	3250	500
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	200,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2150	2150	2150	2150	920
Ivantage Corp.	1.16	1.16	1.14	1.14	11,574,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	44.5	45	44.5	45	995,400
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	45	45	44.5	45	334,100
Manila Electric Co. A	13.25	13.25	13.25	13.25	7,600
Manila Electric Co. B	20	20	19.25	19.5	713,800
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.4	6.5	6.4	6.5	1,933,000
Petron Corp.	4.35	4.35	4.3	4.35	6,248,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1	1.1	1	1.06	670,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.6	18,000
CADP Group Corp.	1.9	2.2	1.9	2.18	146,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	20.5	22	20.5	22	266,500
Jollibee Foods Corp.	35.5	35.5	35.5	35.5	68,600
RFM Corp.	0.77	0.77	0.77	0.77	100,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	2.8	3.15	2.8	3.05	3,478,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	10,000
San Miguel Corp. A	60	60	59.5	60	112,800
San Miguel Corp. B	80.5	81.5	80.5	81.5	110,100
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.2	66,000
Universal Robina Corp.	20.75	20.75	20.25	20.5	2,796,400
Vitarich Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	200,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.31	7,680,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.48	1.48	1.4	1.4	8,470,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.6	4.65	4.55	4.65	1,045,000
CHEMICALS					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	8,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Active Alliance Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	150,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.0675	0.07	0.0675	0.07	900,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.47	0.49	0.47	0.47	650,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.008	0.008	0.0075	0.0075	83,000,000
Ayala Corp.	360	367.5	360	367.5	143,180
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	160,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.4	5.5	5.4	5.4	500,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	10	11.5	10	11.5	1,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.65	2.7	72,000
APC Group Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	2,160,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.008	0.009	0.008	0.0085	659,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.94	0.98	0.94	0.98	1,170,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	30,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.8	5,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.97	0.97	0.96	0.96	4,110,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3.9	4.05	3.85	3.9	11,599,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	2.8	2.8	2.65	2.7	987,000
House Of Investments Inc.	1.34	1.44	1.34	1.38	1,340,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.2	6.4	1,826,000
Medco Holdings	0.22	0.225	0.22	0.22	980,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.14	0.145	0.14	0.145	130,000
Pacifica	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	10,000,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	1,100,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	40,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.58	0.58	0.55	0.55	60,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.14	0.145	0.14	0.145	2,560,000
SM Investments Corp.	214	226	212	226	785,670
South China Resources Inc.	0.9	0.9	0.85	0.85	300,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.56	0.71	0.56	0.68	2,790,000
Uniol Res. & Holdings Co	0.0625	0.065	0.0625	0.065	4,000,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.13	0.14	0.13	0.135	18,550,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc	11.5	11.5	11	11.5	38,558,300
Belle Corp.	1.26	1.3	1.26	1.28	5,217,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	3,410,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1.94	2.02	1.94	2	48,271,000
C & P Homes Inc.	1.84	1.84	1.76	1.76	167,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	3,350,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	100,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.67	0.71	0.67	0.7	104,220,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.029	0.029	0.028	0.029	1,200,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.67	0.67	0.66	0.66	220,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.42	1.44	1.4	1.4	4,753,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	100,000
Gotesco Land Inc B	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	200,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	3.1	3.15	3.1	3.15	38,000
Interport Res.	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	12,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	10,000,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.24	0.245	0.24	0.24	740,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	290,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	700,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	5,930,000
Mrc Allied Ind. Inc.	0.27	0.31	0.27	0.29	4,400,000
Polar Property Holdings	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	50,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	8.9	9.1	8.9	9.1	359,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.35	0.35	0.32	0.33	2,450,000
SM Development Corp.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	772,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.9	7.9	7.8	7.9	1,307,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.125	0.13	0.125	0.13	6,660,000
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	12.75	12.75	12.75	12.75	10,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.94	0.98	0.94	0.97	2,990,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	885	890	885	890	57,540
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	2.9	2.9	2.85	2.9	907,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1950	1955	1945	1955	153,560
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.2	0.21	0.2	0.2	2,420,000
Ionics Inc.	1.38	1.4	1.38	1.38	155,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.045	1,500,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.05	0.0525	0.05	0.0525	700,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.18	1.24	1.18	1.24	64,000
Philweb Corp.	0.028	0.031	0.028	0.031	1,020,300,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.68	1.68	1.68	1.68	1,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	11.75	11.75	11.75	11.75	815,600
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	22,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.72	1.72	1.66	1.72	833,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	100,000
Philippine Racing Club	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	100,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.57	0.59	0.57	0.58	10,070,000
EDUCATION					
iPeople Inc	3.25	3.25	3.05	3.05	69,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	1.9	2.1	1.84	2.08	3,632,000
Paxys Inc.	9.3	9.5	9.3	9.4	1,412,000
Philcomsat Holdings Corp.	1	1	1	1	50,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	3.05	3.2	3	3.05	3,821,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	3.2	3.25	3	3.05	2,547,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.009	0.009	0.0085	0.0085	247,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	7.9	7.9	7.8	7.8	1,105,000
Benguet Corp. A	14.75	14.75	13.75	13.75	84,400
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.94	2.16	1.94	2.16	29,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.4	0.4	0.37	0.4	66,490,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.42	0.43	0.41	0.42	20,370,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.029	0.029	0.028	0.029	816,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.034	0.034	0.032	0.032	429,600,000
Omico Corp.	0.008	0.0085	0.008	0.0085	1,046,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	4	4.05	3.9	4	9,588,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	4	4.05	3.95	4.05	11,252,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	28.5	31.5	28.5	30.5	1,435,400
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.39	0.39	0.38	0.39	960,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.45	0.48	0.45	0.46	960,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.26	0.33	0.26	0.32	16,040,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.012	0.013	0.011	0.012	2,488,600,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.012	0.013	0.011	0.013	443,400,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.7	0.8	0.69	0.79	2,120,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.66	0.81	0.66	0.8	2,050,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	5.4	7.5	5.1	7.4	5,111,000
PREFERRED					
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT 10% Pref Series BB	11	11	11	11	2,200
PLDT 10% Pref Series CC	11	11	11	11	3,400
PLDT 10% Pref Series DD	11	11	11	11	200
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	12.75	13.25	12.75	13.25	124,400

CURRENCIES

April 20, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.807428	1.000000	51.4230
Japan	Yen	0.006894	0.008538	0.4390
United Kingdom	Pound	1.447638	1.792900	92.1963
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.104129	0.128964	6.6317
Switzerland	Franc	0.637477	0.789515	40.5992
Canada	Dollar	0.711202	0.880824	45.2946
Singapore	Dollar	0.505401	0.625939	32.1877
Australia	Dollar	0.601930	0.745490	38.3353
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.141890	2.652731	136.4114
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.215285	0.266631	13.7110
Brunei	Dollar	0.503824	0.623986	32.0872
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000090	0.000112	0.0058
Thailand	Baht	0.021355	0.026448	1.3600
UAE	Dirham	0.219834	0.272264	14.0006
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.238500	63.6874
Argentina	Peso	0.263220	0.325998	16.7638
Brazil	Real	0.381528	0.472523	24.2986
Denmark	Kroner	0.134031	0.165997	8.5361
India	Rupee	0.017939	0.022217	1.1425
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.220459	0.273038	14.0404
Mexico	New Peso	0.073664	0.091233	4.6915
New Zealand	Dollar	0.510869	0.632711	32.5359
Norway	Kroner	0.128418	0.159046	8.1786
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013479	0.016694	0.8585
South Africa	Rand	0.134616	0.166722	8.5733
Korea	Won	0.000854	0.001058	0.0544
Sweden	Kroner	0.107828	0.133545	6.8673
Syria	Pound	0.015554	0.019264	0.9906
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024963	0.030917	1.5898
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000376	0.000466	0.0240

Adultery 101

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

INSTEAD OF IMPOSING a sanction, De La Salle Greenhills even commended a taekwondo instructor who carried an on-campus affair with a very much married mother of four students.

"The (Investigation) Committee strongly recommends to Bro. President (Bernard Oca) that a memo be issued to all concerned that affirms his trust/confidence not only [in] the accused but also [in] the programs and services of their department," said committee chair Herman Rochester.

The three-member committee also cleared another male PE teacher who had been entrapped into luring the same woman into a midnight rendezvous on the school campus. Oca, invoking St. La Salle, subsequently wrote to the complaining husband: "I concur with their decision." The elite Catholic school—"An Empowered La Sallian Family Committed to Excellence in the Service of God, Country and the Global Community" is its new motto—ruled that the taekwondo instructor did not violate any academic policy and never abused his position in carrying on the admitted affair.

"As to the charge that maintaining an adulterous, illicit and immoral relationship ... may lead to a break-up of the pupil's family, ... the court would be in a better position to define/confirm the commission of the offense and not the school," the La Salle report said.

Revolted by the decision, the father-in-law of the erring woman, a San Beda law professor, said he had all four of his grandchildren pulled out of the La Salle grade and high schools after classes ended last month.

The four children, who have since dreaded seeing their now estranged mother and their almost daily encounter with her lover-teacher, have also had to receive counseling.

"Brother Oca has time to rush and pray over mutinous soldiers in Fort Bonifacio on a Sunday evening, yet he never found time to meet and offer a few comforting words to my grandchildren," said the San Beda law professor.

Spare Don Jaime

GLOBE Telecom has expressed annoyance and dismay over the tactics of Greenmeadows residents to publicly drag Ayala patriarch Jaime Zobel in their protest against the continued operation of a Globe cell tower in the subdivision park.

Reacting to an item in this space last Monday, Globe sent a briefing paper on the issue to show that the Ayala-controlled telecom company has obtained all the required government permits, including the prior approval of the Greenmeadows homeowners' association.

While agreeing that the tower has all the requisite papers, Greenmeadows protest leaders Charlie Gorayeb, Manuel Agcaoili, Cecille Yujuico, German Ng, and Lisa So claim that their association president, retired banker Rene Peronilla, never consulted the residents about allowing Globe to build the structure.

"If Peronilla believes that the tower is safe, he should build the cell site in his own garden," said So. "He

COCKTALES/ B4

Araneta contests court order on disputed estate

By Daxim L. Lucas

BUSINESSMAN GROGORIO ARANETA III IS contesting a court decision that stripped him of claims over a 156-hectare property in Caloocan City.

The son-in-law of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos said the contested property called "Pangarap Village" was acquired in good faith by his family's Carmel Development Inc., and was not "illegally seized."

"Carmel acquired [these titles] clean from [Paquita] Eusebio in 1954," he said through a written statement given to the INQUIRER. "Clean means there were no inscriptions of government liens or claims at the dorsal portions of the titles of these people."

Araneta was reacting to an earlier story which reported that Caloocan City Regional Trial Court Judge Adoracion Angeles ruled that the disputed property under Carmel was part of the friar lands that were illegally seized under a 1973 Marcos decree for the benefit of the "Malacañang Homeowners Association."

"The decision is still far from being final," Araneta's statement said. "Carmel has filed a motion for reconsideration with the court that rendered the decision."

In a January 1988 decision, the Supreme Court ruled that the Marcos decree was unconstitutional and the subsequent titles to the disputed property null and void.

The Caloocan judge used this ruling as basis for her decision, and rejected Carmel Farms' defense that it was an "innocent purchaser of value."

The Araneta family is insisting, however, that the transaction enjoys a "presumption of regularity," especially since it is not the original purchaser of the property.

Shares close ...

From page B1

This was the best finish since Aug. 25, 1999, when the market ended at 2,260.14.

Turnover was 7.77 billion shares worth P1.99 billion ($38.75 million).

The broader all-shares index advanced 13.75 points to 1,382.81.

Gainers outnumbered losers 80 to 27, with 44 stocks unchanged.

The peso was at 51.35 to the dollar by midday.

AFP

PRULINK — **PRU LIFE U.K.**

Investments of Variable Life Insurance Contracts	Current Week Apr. 18, 2006	Last Week Apr. 11, 2006
Bond Fund - Peso	1.47130	1.46883
Managed Fund - Peso	1.59466	1.59031
Growth Fund - Peso	1.20997	1.20209
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.2497	1.2466

* Note: These investments of variable life insurance contracts are not mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission.

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Investment Funds of Wealth Builder & Wealth Secure

	UNIT PRICES (in Php)	
	April 17, 2006	April 10, 2006
Fixed Income Fund	1.172578	1.171498
Balanced Fund	1.159306	1.158118
Equity Fund	1.130636	1.129155

These investment funds are specific to variable life insurance contracts and are not considered mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission.

The weekly unit prices are also available at www.insularlife.com.ph.

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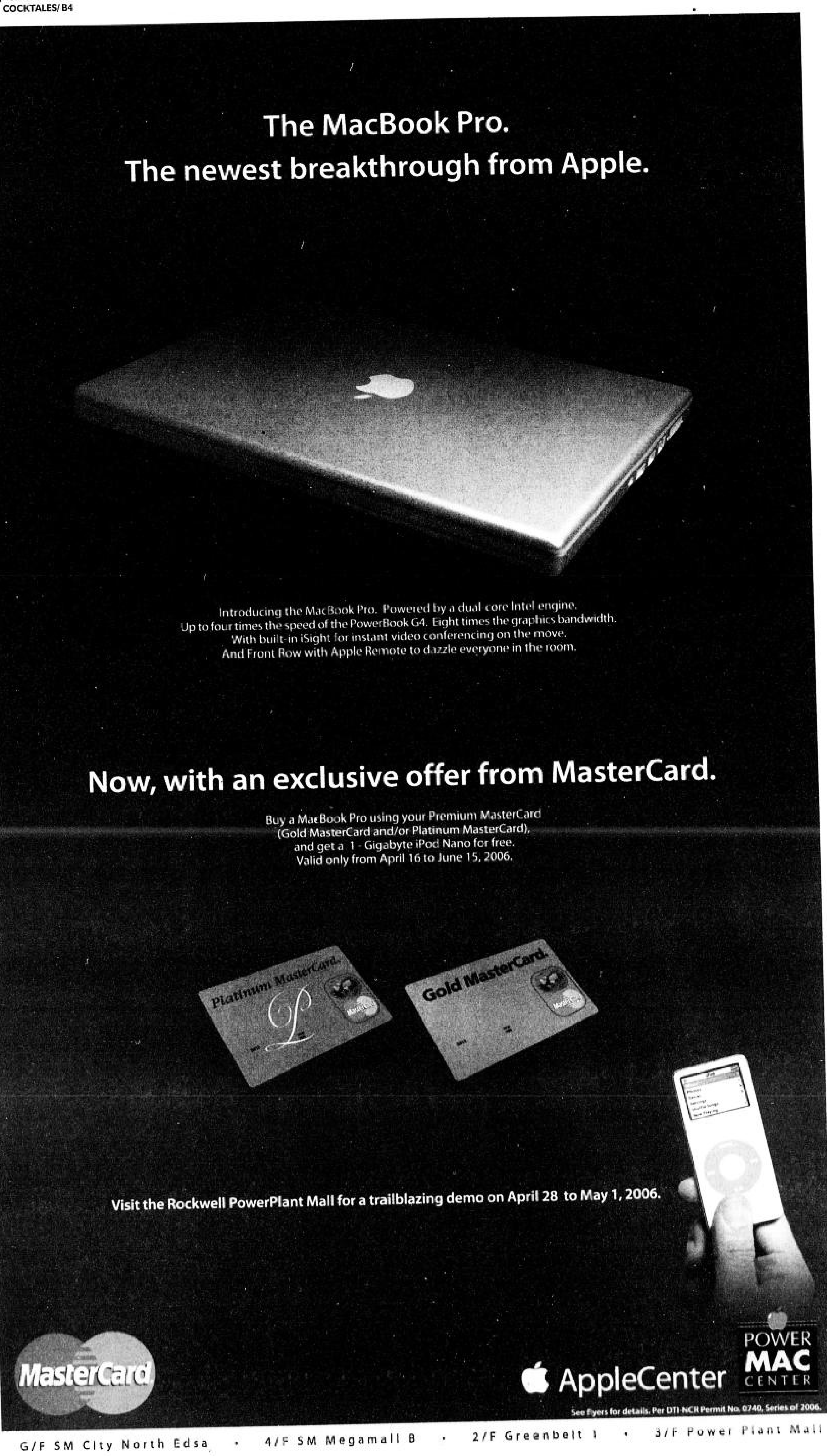
Per DTI-NCR Permit # A2-184 Series of 2006



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Corporate bond offerings seen increasing

Gov't moves to develop, boost capital market

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF TREASURY IS projecting an increase in the issuance of bonds by private corporations in the short to medium term, saying the government has already put in place measures that will help boost the country's capital market.

Government securities presently account for the bulk, from 95 to 98 percent, of the total bond issues in the country, reflecting a shallow capital market where corporations do not play much of a role.

But National Treasurer Omar Cruz said the declining interest rates on government securities had set low benchmark rates for companies that intended to issue bonds of their own to fund expenditure and expansion programs.

A declining interest rate on government securities would mean companies hoping to borrow from the capital market to finance projects could issue bonds at lower interest rates.

"They will be given a credit risk premium (over that of the interest rates imposed on government securities used as benchmarks). They can now borrow at a lesser cost," Cruz said.

Last Monday, Treasury bill rates declined across all maturities on account of high liquidity in the system and the government's improving fiscal position that cut its borrowing requirements, resulting in reduced supply of government securities.

The bellwether 91-day bill rate fell to its lowest in nearly four years to only 4.6 percent. The four-year treasury bond, meanwhile, sunk to its all-time low of only 6.5 percent last Tuesday, still on account of huge demand for government securities among banks.

"What we want is to set up a capital market that is encouraging for business. Reducing the cost of doing business is imperative," Cruz said.

Cruz said the government was hoping that private companies would begin to account for a bigger share of the bond issues.

Cruz said the need to encourage companies to issue more bonds and take an active participation in the market had been magnified by the possibility of a reduced government securities issuances due to the state's improving fiscal position.

"Banks cannot merely rely on government securities. They have to spread their investments," Cruz said.

The huge demand for government securities, according to Cruz, indicates that banks do not have enough investment options. But he said the declining interest rates could open the doors for corporations to start increasing their bond issues as a means of meeting their financial requirements.

Cruz said the development of the country's capital market would also partly depend on the country's economic growth. He said the 4.8-percent gross domestic product growth rate last year would have to be increased to at least 7 percent.

Sugar prices stabilizing

By Christine A. Gaylican

RETAIL PRICES OF SUGAR have stabilized at a range of P38 to P42 per kilo as the scheduled arrival of 50,000 metric tons of imported sugar in June ended speculations in the market, the Sugar Regulatory Authority said.

SRA Administrator James Christopher Ledesma yesterday said the current price range was much lower than the P55 to P60 per kilo registered in early January.

Ledesma said sugar prices started to drop as production peaked and showed signs that the the target of 2.018 million metric tons for crop year 2005-2006 would be exceeded.

As of Feb. 26, 2006, production reached 1.412 million metric tons (MT) or 70 percent of this year's production target.

Raw sugar prices have likewise gone back to normal levels of P750 to P900 per 50-kilo bag from a high of P1,200 per bag, as the National Food Authority (NFA) started buying raw sugar to ensure supply.

Archie B. Amarra, Sugar Master Plan Foundation Inc. executive director, said the shipment of the 50,000 MT of imported sugar should not be allowed until June 1.

"The import should not come in until June 1. We're still at the peak of the milling season," he said. Amarra said the priority was to fill up the country's export commitment first.

The sugar industry has already started shipping portion of its 216,438 MT sugar quota to the United States for this year.

This quota level represents an increase of 58 percent or 80,000 MT from 137, 353 MT in the previous years.

Ledesma said sugar exporters were also given the authority to import this year. These are All Asian Countertrade Inc. , ED&F Man Holdings Ltd., Amerop Sugar Corp., Sugar and Allied Industries Ltd., Busco Sugar Milling Company Inc., La Perla Sugar Export Corp. and Delmax Trading Inc.

Q1 budget gap . . .

From page B1

payments of the government's loan interests rather than the overshooting of operating expenses. He said capital expenditures and personnel expenses were maximized according to program, but were kept within target, to achieve the government's pump-priming goal.

Data from the Bureau of the Treasury showed that interest payments reached P103.8 billion compared with the program of only P96 billion, as the government moved to frontload the payment of its maturing obligations for the year.

On the revenues side, all three major collecting agencies—the Bureau of Internal Revenue, the Bureau of Customs and the Bureau of the Treasury—all surpassed their targets.

The BIR collected P135 billion compared with its P131.4-billion goal, while the BOC hit P42.3 billion compared with its target of P38.6 billion. The Treasury collected P17.3 billion versus its P11.60-billion programmed collection for the period.

Cruz said the improving revenue collection would give the Philippines a better chance in attaining a favorable outlook from international ratings firms.

According to the treasurer, the government has already shifted its policy to improve its fiscal position from belt-tightening to pump-priming, which is coupled with increase in revenue collection.

That way, the country could boost economic growth while it sticks to its budget targets, he said.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATIONS
LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE
East Avenue, Quezon City
E-mail Address: ltombox@lto.gov.ph • Website: www.lto.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Republic of the Philippines

Security Services for CY 2006 at the LTO Central Office

The Land Transportation Office, through the General Fund (101) intends to apply the sum of Five Million Two Hundred Seventy Five Thousand Six Hundred Pesos (P5,275,600.00) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) of payment for the Security Services for CY 2006 at the LTO Central Office. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The Land Transportation Office now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the items. The required delivery schedule will be indicated in the approved Contract. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, orgnizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the BAC Sub-Committee and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of Php 10,000.00, in the form of cash. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The Land Transportation Office will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on May 5, 2006 at 2:00 p.m. at the LTO-Library, East Avenue, Quezon City.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before May 17, 2006 at 2:00 p.m. All bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in any of the following form:

Form of Security	Minimum Amount in % of Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid
1. Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit	One percent (1%)
2. Bank guarantee	One and a half Percent (1½%)
3. Surety Bond	Two and a half Percent (2 ½%)
4. Foreign government guarantee	One hundred percent (100%)

Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be on May 17, 2006 at 2:00 p.m. at LTO-Library, East Avenue, Quezon City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

The Land Transportation Office reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Land Transportation Office
Atty. Jimmy G. Pesigan - Chairman, BAC
East Avenue, Quezon City
(02) 921-9077 - telefax

Engr. Roberto S. Se - Chairman, BAC Sub-Committee
Property Section, LTO, East Avenue, Quezon City
(02) 9202015 - telefax

(Sgd.) ATTY. JIMMY G. PESIGAN
BAC - Chairman

(PDI - April 21, 2006)

Cement makers seek shield

By Ronnel W. Domingo

LOCAL CEMENT MAKERS ARE SEEKING protection for the industry by including cement in the list of products to be submitted to the on-going World Trade Organization negotiations for exclusion from a tariff reduction program.

The Cement Manufacturers Association of the Philippines said cement should be listed as a sensitive product while manufacturing it should be recognized as a strategic industry.

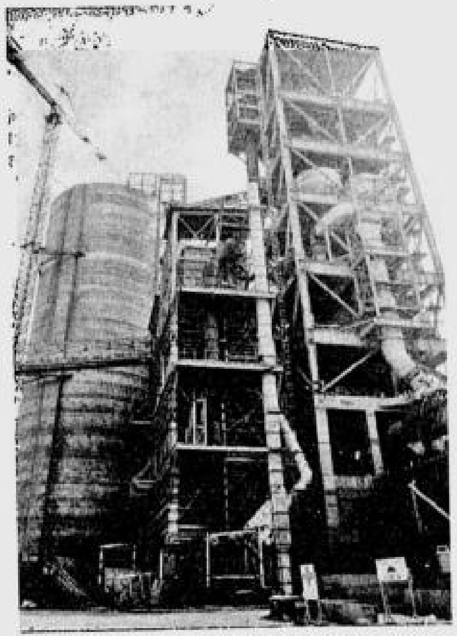
One of the topics up for discussion in the WTO's non-agricultural market access negotiations is the identification of products that would not be assigned a maximum allowable tariff.

Currently, WTO recognizes only five "vulnerable" sectors whose products may form part of the so-called exclusion list—fishery, footwear, petrochemicals, iron and steel, and automotive parts.

"The government should push for the listing of cement as a vulnerable sector considering that it is actually a strategic industry," Cemap executive director Ernesto Ordoñez said.

He explained that an industry could be considered strategic if it has significant contribution to the economy and if it has a pivotal role in affecting major sectors in the country.

"Cement manufacturing is such an industry because of the thousands of people it employs directly and indirectly; the multiplier effect it entails because of its anchor or catalytic position; and its critical role in achieving agro-industrial development," Ordoñez said.



CEMAP wants cement manufacturing to be recognized as a strategic industry.

The Cemap official reiterated that local manufacturers continued to suffer from excess capacity, with total utilization reaching only 62 percent.

Local cement makers suffered a setback when the Department of Trade and Industry dismissed last month Cemap's petition for definitive safeguard duties on imports following a Supreme Court decision that said there was no serious threat of injury to the domestic industry to warrant such protection.

ROUND-UP

UPCG investment unit sold

THE UNITED PACIFIC CAPITAL GROUP REcently sold its investment house, United Pacific Capital Corp., to RL Roa Realty and Development.

Cesar T. Duque, chair of the UPCC Group, said RL Roa Realty and Development Inc. would be operating the investment house under the name Fusion Capital.

Duque said the realty and securities business of the group did not form part of the sale.

The group is engaged in various small- to medium-scale niche market real property projects in key areas outside Metro Manila and is also a participant in the securities market.

P6B RLC capex

ROBINSONS Land Corp. is setting aside P6 billion for expansion and capital expenditure this year, said executive vice president Frederick Go at yesterday's annual stockholder's meeting.

Of the amount, P2 billion will be earmarked for land banking, P2.5 billion for high-rise projects and buildings catering to business processing and outsourcing firms, and P1.5 billion for construction of new malls.

Elizabeth L. Sanchez

BPI profit up 27%

BANK of the Philippine Islands posted a 27-percent increase in first-quarter profit to P2.5 billion from a year ago, on higher fee-based and investment gains.

The bank told the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday that operating costs were also kept at bay, rising by only 4 percent as against total revenues which increased by a faster pace of 9 percent.

The increase in total revenues was fueled by the 22 percent growth in non-interest income mainly from treasury trading gains, service charges and commissions, earnings from its insurance subsidiary as well as the asset management, trust and rental businesses.

Interest income rose by a modest 2 percent as spreads narrowed by 33 basis points over a year ago.

Return on equity and assets improved to 18 percent and 2 percent, respectively. *Doris C. Dumalo*

Potential disaster in World Trade Organization

COMMENTARY

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

TRADE SECRETARY PETER FAVILA should be commended for making an unprecedented bold move. As the Philippine delegation head of the WTO Ministerial Meeting in Hong Kong last December 2005, he designated private sector leaders as advisers for and official delegates to the WTO negotiations. Agriculture Secretary Domingo Panganiban did likewise.

As a result, the Philippine delegation was able to achieve significant gains at the December meeting. However, further negotiations this year in Geneva may result in losing these gains if the private sector's active participation is stopped.

April 19-21 negotiations

Today is the third day of the WTO negotiations which started on April 19 on WTO's Non Agricultural Market Access Agreement (Nama). This covers all industries and the fisheries sector.

Buddy Dela Cruz, coordinator of Kilusang Mangingisda which is the largest coalition of small fisherfolk today, says: "Fisheries should be part of the WTO's Agreement on Agriculture (AOA), rather than grouped with industries in WTO's Nama. We have to fight extra hard for our interests to be understood and protected, especially since we constitute both the largest and the poorest sector in Nama."

The figures below, taken from the WTO's Trade Report 2004, are relevant to these negotiations:

NAMA
(Industries and Fisheries)

[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
India	34.3	27.7
Mexico	34.9	17.1
Brazil	30.8	14.1
Thailand	24.2	14.2
Philippines	23.4	4.3

A bound rate is a maximum tariff rate negotiated between the WTO and a country for a specific item. An applied rate is the rate a country decides on its own for that same item. We can make three conclusions from the above table. First is that we have the lowest negotiated average bound rate, despite our poor preparedness for global competition. The second is that we have the lowest average applied rate. The difference here is far more significant, where our 4.3 percent rate provides very little protection for our products compared to other countries. We have found from other documents that this rate may be 7 percent, but we are using the WTO report for cross country comparisons.

The third conclusion showed that while we had the option to bring our applied rates closer to our bound rates as allowed by WTO, we instead engaged in what former WTO appellate body chair Justice Florentino Feliciano calls "unilateral disarmament." While the main problem today is our own policy of too rapid liberalization, we have to fight for at least preserving our flexibility to increase our applied rates to close to our current WTO bound levels since these are already very low.

For example, if a certain product with an applied rate of 4 percent has its bound rate decreased from 23 percent to 10 percent, we will forever be constrained to a maximum of 10 percent. This will be unfair, specially if we see our neighboring countries applying much higher tariffs.

Mario Jose Sereno of the Fair Trade Alliance says: "Unfortunately, this is happening today. Our highest applied rate is 30 percent, compared to Malaysia's 300 percent, Indonesia's 170 percent, India's 160 percent, and Thailand's 80 percent."

Common stand

Two days ago, five umbrella organizations took a common stand on a proposed minimum position for the WTO Nama negotiations. These groups are the Fair Trade Alliance, Alyansa Agrikultura (representing fisheries), the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Federation of Philippine Industries and the Philippine Exporters Foundation.

They proposed higher co-efficients and mark-ups for the Swiss formula used to determine the pace of tariff cut (a target of 50 and a minimum of 35 instead of 25), a higher level of tariff lines exempted from required WTO bound rates (10 percent instead of 5 percent), a longer implementation time frame (10 years as unanimously recommended by the G30 group of 30 developing nations for the agriculture agreement, instead of five years), and an adjustment number so we can take credit for having voluntarily reduced our tariffs to very low levels during our "unilateral disarmament" (1.5 signifying a 50 percent credit, instead of no credit at all).

For fisheries, this would mean that, if bound, our very low applied rate of 7 percent will be bound at 32 percent instead of 14 percent. This would still be low, considering other countries' much higher tariffs and massive subsidies, while our fisheries have practically no subsidies.

Similar benefits would apply to our industrial products if the private sector position is adopted. If this position is rejected, the current average 23.5 percent tariff rate will likely be decreased to 12 percent. This would be a disaster for our ailing economy.

It is hoped that our government negotiators support and continue Secretary Favila's bold initiative of involving the private sector in the ongoing WTO negotiations and listening to their views. Our country and our people deserve no less.

(The author is Agriwatch chair. For inquiries and suggestions, email agriwatchphil@yahoo.com or telefax 02-8516635.)

Cocktales

From page B3

could use the P60,000 monthly rental from Globe, as well as the daily dose of radiation."

Money-go-round

- THE ANNUAL stockholders' meeting of the International Container Terminal Services Inc. is almost always done within half an hour, but yesterday's meet was particularly quick, about 20 minutes. "Just like the people's initiative," quipped ICTSI chair/CEO Enrique Razon Jr.
- A retired general has placed on the block his six-bedroom, two-story house with a four-car garage and a swimming pool in a 400-square-meter property within the Fort's AFP Officers' Village for P18.5 million.

Heard through the grapevine

LIKE their Pampanga counterparts who want an exit in every town traversed by the Subic-Tarlac expressway, the Bulacan mayors have also been lobbying and pressuring North Rail to include a stop in their respective towns, thus threatening to transform what originally was conceived as an Airport Express into a Milk Run Local.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

E-mail: pr_business@inquirer.com.ph

BUSINESS Friday

Business Features Editor **Margie Quimpo-Espino**

Old favorites in franchise awards

ALL-TIME FAVORITES MADE IT to the Franchise Excellence Awards 2005.

The FEA is a recognition given to the franchisors and franchisees, local and international, that have epitomized a successful franchise in terms of business growth and financial stability as well as ethical practices. It is by the Philippine Franchise Association (PFA) in partnership with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) and the Philippine Retailers Association (PRA).

The winners of the Most Outstanding Filipino Franchise of the Year must have shown consistent growth and positive financial performance for the past years. They will serve as models on how Filipino ingenuity, creativity and innovation stand out in the competitive world.

Two companies were elevated to the Hall of Fame for winning in the same category twice—Goldilocks Bakeshop and Greenwich Pizza.

Goldilocks Bakeshop for the Food: Specialty—Large Scale Category/Franchise Marketing Campaign of the Year—Large Scale.

Now on its 40th year, Goldilocks Bakeshop is embedded in the Filipino psyche, crossing generations carrying over 400 quality products with more than 209 stores worldwide.

Greenwich Pizza Corp. won in the fast-food category.

From a mom and pop type of business that started in 1971 to 237 outlets nationwide today, Greenwich Pizza is one Filipino pizza chain that has successfully become the leading pizza network in the Philippines through continuous innovations and aggressive store expansion.

Pancake House won Most Outstanding Filipino Franchise of the Year in the restaurant category.

Pancake House started in 1971 and now has 59 outlets nationwide. After undergoing a successful expansion program, Pancake house has developed a popular brand name, an array of much-loved products, a steady market and solid reputation.

Julie's Franchise Corp. won in the food: specialty—medium scale category/Franchise Marketing Campaign of the Year.

Julie's Bakeshop was established in 1981 as a mom-and-pop type of business by the couple Rodrigo and Julia Gandionco of Mandaue City in Cebu. Today, it has 400 branches and outlets nationwide.

A classic example of how SMEs could grow into the mainstream business via franchising, the company's vision is to have a Julie's bakeshop in every town.

Netopia Internet Café won Outstanding Filipino Franchise of the Year Award, Service Category.

The largest Internet Café chain in the Philippines, Netopia has 184 branches nationwide including 4 branches in Thailand. Backed by the country's largest telecommunications provider, PLDT, its phenomenal growth is attributed to its innovative and creative marketing and promotional activities and development and launching of exciting new products.

The winners of the Most Promising Filipino Franchise of the Year must have shown two successful years in franchise operations and have demonstrated unique and creative marketing efforts and innovation in store operations. They are considered to be the future flagship players in the Philippine franchise industry.

Folded & Hung won in the Retail: Non-Food Category

Folded & Hung started its business in 1998 and to date, has 25 stores located in major malls. F & H's steady growth and increase in market share can be attributed to its aggressiveness and determination to meet the demands of a growing fashion industry in a highly competitive business environment.

Brother's Burger won in the Food Category.

Brother's Burger started franchising in 1999 and since then, has grown to 12 outlets offering flame-broiled gourmet burgers and choices of toppings.

The winners for Franchise Marketing Campaign of the Year must have shown a comprehensive and well-defined franchise program executed with an effective and innovative franchise marketing campaign which extensively contributed to the franchise's growth.

Candy Corner won for the Kiosk Category. Candy Corner started franchising in 1996. Today, it has over 78 outlets nationwide. With over 300 varieties in stock and access to over 2,000 varieties of confectioneries, Candy Corner is the first retail outlet in the Philippines to combine the pick and mix concept with the traditional package and novelty confectionery.

Crystal Clear won the Franchise Marketing Campaign of the Year: Service Category

Started franchising in 1997, Crystal Clear today has over 330 outlets nationwide including two outlets in Malaysia and Indonesia.

BAYO won Franchise Marketing Campaign of the Year—Retail Category

BAYO started franchising in 2001 and through the years has grown to 48 outlets nationwide.

It used a strong marketing campaign—excellent quality clothing under a strong Filipino brand.

The winners of the Franchisee of the Year Category must have shown outstanding contributions which led to the improvement of the franchise system, sustained good relationship with the franchisor and must have introduced initiatives to improve the franchise operations.

Winner of Franchisee of the Year: Food Category—Large Scale was Oscar and Gail Santos, SC Foods Corporation, franchisee of Max's Restaurant.

Starting with its first Max's Restaurant in 1999 in Olongapo City, SC FOODS Corporation now has branches at SM Marilao, and Meycauayan, Bulacan. Gail introduces and implements innovative ideas to improve operations inside the restaurant, one of which is the use of Kuba, a device to cut fuel consumption.

Winner for Franchisee of the Year: Food Category—Medium Scale was Alvin and Florethel "Ritchie" Hawak

Altrich Trading, Franchisee of Julie's Franchising Corporation.

Born and raised in Cebu, "Ritchie" started her Julie's Franchise in 2002 in Batangas, and now has other branches in Batangas City, Balagtas and Lipa City.

Altrich Trading contributed initiatives like the standardization of Julie's Product Poster Guide, introduction of special cakes and pursuance of staff development through comprehensive training programs. To improve customer service, Ritchie Hawak introduced the use of headsets and microphones for bakers and front liners and acquired and used selling tools in order to help promote Julie's in the locality. She actively pursued socio-civic projects.

Winner for Franchisee of the Year - Service Category was Reynaldo and Catherine Nisce, NISCE Enterprises, Franchisee of Mr. Quickie Corporation

NISCE ENTERPRISES started Mr. Quickie's operations in 1995 and now has several branches. It implemented local initiatives resulting to Mr. Quickie's leadership in the bag and shoe repair businesses.

Lessons from Young Market Masters Awardees–II

MARKETING Rx

Dr. Ned Roberto & Ardy Roberto

CAROLINE L. Lopez, Product Manager, Merck Sharp & Dohme (MSD), YMMA Awardee for Pharmaceutical Products-Advocacy Marketing.

She is responsible for the success of MSD's male pattern hair loss wonder Propecia. Lopez addressed challenges that included competitive and psychological concerns and a predominantly patriarchal Filipino culture. Caroline embarked on the ProHAIR marketing advocacy campaign dubbed Propecia: Be Bold, Not Bald.

This included strategies like an advocacy campaign on hair loss being a preventable condition.

Reinforced through strategic placement of advertising in print, radio and new media, Caroline is widely responsible for Propecia's 96 percent growth in market share in the first year alone. In 2005, Propecia sales grew by 30 percent capturing 99.1 percent of market share by the third quarter.

"There are two virtues I believe that would propel someone to fulfill their dreams and aspirations: passion for excellence and taking pride in one's work. It is not a plan but it deals directly with our character on a personal level. It's the attitude of saying, 'It all starts with me and I can make things happen,'" Caroline advised.

Edison C. Oribiana, Business Development Manager, Charter Chemical and Coating Corp. (Davies Paints), YMMA Awardee for Business-to-Business Products—Business Development.

Edison joined Charter Chemical in 1993 as Marketing Representative. Today, as BDM, he implemented customer relations management programs that increased the market share of Davies Paints, a Filipino brand.

Oribiana's achievements include the creation of the Davies Barkada Painters Club and its high-end counterpart, Davies Premium Club. Backed by market insights, these initiatives seek to identify key decision-makers in the purchase of paint products across the different segments targeted by the company.

Oribiana is also responsible for the company's strategic and early entry into the Do-it-Yourself market through co-branding activities with the leading builder's depot chains in the country. His advice for budding marketers:

"Arm yourself. The things you have learned inside your classroom are seldom enough. You can be a better marketer by equipping yourself with knowledge of 'real marketing.' Find an industry where you are most comfortable with and if you are already working for a company, study thoroughly the responsibilities given to you. You must immerse yourself. You must join the troops in the frontlines. Experience the work of a salesperson so that you will know what is needed in the battlefield. Know who your customers are, their wants and their interests. You must feel their heartbeat and be intimate with them. Know your competition. Do your research. Never stop learning and read. Observe how other marketers are doing their marketing.

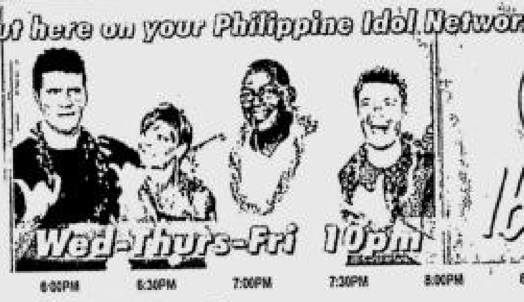
There is really no secret to be successful in marketing. It entails a lot of hard work and guts. What sustains me is perhaps my passion to be the best that I can be. I put in a lot of will power in order that my programs gets implemented because in the real world you can't just do what you want to do. It entails selling your ideas to your superiors and this might need a lot of energy that might drain you even before you get your programs off the ground. You must be brave enough to put everything in the line if you truly believe in your programs. There should be no middle ground."

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE

Friday, April 21, 2006

Who will be next? Find out here on your Philippine Idol Network



American Idol
Wed-Thurs-Fri 10pm
ABC Iba Tayo!

Provided by ClickTheCity.com

For more TV schedules:
1. Visit www.ClickTheCity.com or wap.clickthecity.com.
2. Key in CTC TV and send to 2333 for Globe and to 225 for Smart. PhP2.50 per SMS sent.

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5			WNCAA (Rerun)	National Geographic	PBA				Sentro	PBA					Big News	Something About Miriam		Real Stories	Insider
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema			Pasion de Amor	Little Amy	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Outstanding Twins	TV Patrol World		Gulong Ng Palad	Sa Piling Mo	Panday	Princess Lulu		Gudtaym		I Spy	
AXN		Sports Disaster VI		Cheating Death Catastrophes Caught On Tape III		Fear Factor (Season V)		Sakura Wars	Sakura Wars	PSI Factor (Season II)		Gamemax (Season II)	E Buzz	Agent Cody Banks					
Cartoon Network	Police Academy	Richie Rich	Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi	Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Codename Kids Next Door	Foster's Home For Imaginary Friends	The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	Power Rangers Wild Force	PokeMon	Yu-Gi-Oh Double Duel		Powerpuff Girls		Mucha Lucha	Duck Dodgers	Justice League	Samurai Jack
Cinema One		Batang Iwahig				Dekada 70				Nang Iniwan Mo Ako				Rosario 18				Kahit Kailan	
Cinemax	Beetlejuice			Mystic River					The Adventures Of Brisco County Jr.			The 51st State			Gargoyle's Revenge			S.W.A.T	
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia	World News Asia	Your World Today			
Crime/Suspense		Surface		Law & Order Special Victims Unit		Profiler		Forensic Files	Hollywood Justice	Law & Order		Law & Order: Special Victims/Dominick Dunne's Power, Privilege & Justice		Law & Order: Criminal Intent		Crossing Jordan			
Discovery Channel		Extreme Engineering		Deadly Women		Beyond Tomorrow		Stay Alive		Rides		American Chopper		Beyond Tomorrow		Psychic Witness		Crime Night	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Unattractive Bunny	Mickey Mouse and Friends	Lilo & Stitch	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	That's So Raven That's So Trendy Week	Wonderful World Of Disney			Brandy & Mr. Whiskers		Mickey Mouse and Friends	Chip N Dale's Rescue Rangers	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN		Pro Billiards '05 Men's Int'l Challenge of Champs		Women's Pro Billiards '06 WPBA Carolina Classic Finals		Pool Snooker World Pool League '05 Poland		Pool Snooker World Pool League '05 Poland		LPGA Golf Mastercard Classic Honoring		Sportscenter Asia		Sportscenter Asia	Major League Baseball Phils. Mets Vs Padres				
ETC		Saturday Night Live		Change of Heart	Eliminidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Joan Of Arcadia		American Dreams 2		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
EWTN	The Good Code The Natural Law	Angelus (3:15 PM)	The Donut Man	Angel Force	Rosary With Mother Angelica	EWTN Gallery	Backstage	The Gospel Of Life in Health	Defending Life	Life on The Rock Encore		Daily Mass Live		Angelus (9:15 PM)	Parable	EWTN Bookmark	St. Thomas Aquinas In Today's World	Fr. John Corapi	
Fox News		Hannity & Colmes		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Fox & Friends						Fox News Live			
GMA 7	Kung Mamahalin Mo Lang Ako	Now and Forever	First Love Of A Royale Prince		Dragonball Z	Great Teacher Onizuka	Le Robe de Mariage	24 Oras		Extra Challenge	Majika	Encantadia	My Name Is Kim Sam Soon	Jewel In The Palace		Bubble Gang			Saksi
Hallmark Channel		Mcleod's Daughters IV (3:15PM)		Shadow Zone My Teacher Ate My Homework				Bewitched	The Nanny	Family Law III		Missing II		Hustle		The Sign of Four			Hustle (11:45PM)
HBO				Moscow On The Hudson				For Keeps?			Police Academy: Mission To Moscow			50 First Dates			A Nightmare On Elm Street (10:40PM)		
Hero TV	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	D.I.C.E.	Samurai Deeper Kyo	Combattler V	Gundam Seed	Iron Man 28	Beyblade G-Revolution	Yu-Gi-Oh GX	Naruto	Mirmo de Pon	Inuyasha	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	D.I.C.E.	Samurai Deeper Kyo	Gundam Seed
JackTV	Primetime Glick	The Late Show David Letterman		Jack In The Box				Megas XLR	Bust The Geeks	Mad TV			Always Sunny In Philadelphia	The Late Show David Letterman		The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Premium Blend	Reno 911	Insomniac W/ Dave Attell
Lifestyle Network	Country Style																		
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYXLOG		Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Club MYX	MYX Versions	Urban MYX	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXLOG
National Geographic	Africa From The Ground Up	Explorations Powered by Duracell	Rough Trades	Nat'l Geographic Amazing Moments				Top 5		Wow!		About Asia		Terrorism Watch		Explorations Powered By Duracell	Rough Trades	Animal Cannibals	
NBN		Teledyaryo Alas-Tres		Teledyaryo Sports Atbp	[illegible]	[illegible] W/ Rey Langit & Angelique Lazo		Tinig ng Bayan (Live)				Teledyaryo Final Edition				Bantay OCW With Susan K			
Nickelodeon				My Life As A Teenage Robot	All Grown Up	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	SpongeBob SquarePants	Drake & Josh	Naturally Sadie			All Grown Up	As Told By Ginger	Four Eyes	SpongeBob SquarePants	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	The Fairly Odd Parents	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Wicker Park (Dubbed in Tagalog)				Villa Estrella				Fight Night 5				Ilusyon				[illegible]
Qtv	Ikaw Lang Ang Mamahalin		Zenki	Kaleido Star	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Love At Aegean Sea	Irene	Hoot	Laugh To Laugh: Ang Kulit	Ganda Ng Lola Ko		News On Q	Love Life		Irene	Over The Green Fields
RPN 9							[illegible]	Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	WWE Smackdown		World Poker Tour		The Ultimate Fighter		Newswatch Now	TV Gratis On Friday		
SBN 21				New Life TV Shopping				Winner TV Shopping		Quantum Global		Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Shepherd's Voice		SBN Music Video	
Solar Sports										Sagupaan	NBA Jam	Sportsdesk					Sportsdesk	Asian Badminton C'ships Finals	
Sports Plus		Arena Football League						World Game		Rasworld		[illegible] Turnovision	Rookie Manual	BD Lola Powell	Wild Side	FIFA Preview Series 10	Golf Today	Inside the PGA	Shell Houston Open Day 1
Star Movies		Lies My Mother Told Me			[illegible] Moon (4:20 PM)			Body Count			Hunt For Justice (7:25 PM)			Saw			The Fan (10:45PM)		
Star World	8 Simple Rules/Arrested Development	The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Ed		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Seinfeld	TNA Wrestling		The Collector		NYPD Blue		Seinfeld	Walker Texas Ranger
Studio 23	Dance Idol	Masked Rider Ryuki				Batman Beyond	Teen Titans	The Batman	Justice League Unlimited	Wazzup Wazzup		Barkada Nights				News Central	Oprah		Just Shoot Me

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

MANUEL LEGASPI JOSON, JR.

Passed away on April 16, 2006 at the age of 62.

He was born in Talavera, Nueva Ecija.

He left behind his wife **Marjorie N. Joson** and children **Rianne** and **Vince**, **Toy** and **Pepe**.

His remains lie at the Camella II, Talon Las Piñas Chapel in Camella Homes II in Las Piñas City.

He will be laid to rest on April 23 at the Golden Haven Memorial Park on Quirino Avenue in Las Piñas after the 9 a.m. Mass at the Camella Homes II chapel.

His loved ones and friends are requesting the pious readers for prayers for his soul.

CLASSIFIEDS

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
860 Quezon Ave., Quezon City, Metro Manila 1103
Tel. Nos. 372-5057 * 372-5061
Fax Nos. 372-5048 * 372-5042

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) invites PhilGEPS registered suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following items:

Item/ Description	Approved Budget for the Contract	Date/Time		Price of Bid Documents (non-refundable)	End-User Agency
		Pre-Bid Conference	Deadline/ Opening of Bids		
Supply Materials and Installation of 29 units Aircondition	P2,699,250.00	May 2, 2006 10:00 AM	May 15, 2006 10:00 AM	P500.00	BFAR

The Bid documents shall be available at the BFAR Property Section starting **April 24, 2006** upon payment of non-refundable fee indicated above.

The Pre-Bid Conference shall be at **BFAR Conference Room**. The bidders shall drop their duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals in three sealed envelopes in the bid located at the abovementioned address.

For more information, please call the BAC-Secretariat at Tel. Nos. 373-7446 & 372-5052.

BFAR reserves the right to waive any formality in the responses to the eligibility requirements and/to this invitation. BFAR further reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) MALCOLM I. SARMIENTO, JR.
Director

(PDI - April 21, 2006)

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More Classified Ads on Pages A21 & B4

> *"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."* — **Romans 8:38-39**

We remember dearly

CARLOS MIGUEL B. PALANCA

ON HIS 3rd DEATH ANNIVERSARY
APRIL 22, 2006

Masses will be offered tomorrow, April 22, 2006 at the following churches:

Santuario de San Antonio Parish *Forbes Park, Makati City*	7:30 a.m.
San Isidro Parish *Taft Avenue, Manila*	6:00 a.m.
St. James the Great Parish *Ayala Alabang Village, Muntinlupa, Metro Manila*	6:20 a.m.

CLASSIFIEDS

BOARD OF INVESTMENTS
DEPARTMENT OF TRADE & INDUSTRY PHILIPPINES

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **GENERAL TUNA CORPORATION** is applying for registration with the Board of Investments (BOI) as New Producer of Processed Tuna on a Pioneer status at an annual capacity of 170,100 cases with project site located at Bgy. Tambler, General Santos City, South Cotabato.

Any person with valid objection/s on the abovementioned project may file his/her objection in writing, under oath, with the BOI within three (3) days from the date of this publication.

(Sgd.) RUDY B. CAÑA
Director
Project Evaluation and Registration Department

(PDI-April 21, 2006)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN
Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City

BULLETIN OF VACANT POSITIONS

(In Compliance with R.A. 7041)

OFFICE OF LEGAL AFFAIRS/
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF LEGAL COUNSEL

I. GRAFT INVESTIGATION & PROSECUTION OFFICER II, Item No OMBA-GIO2-35-1998; SG 27

Education: Bachelor of Laws; Experience: 4 years of relevant experience. Training: 24 hours of relevant training; Eligibility: RA 1080 (BAR)

Applicants should submit within ten (10) calendar days from the date of this publication to the Human Resource Management Division at the above address, the following requirements:

1) A letter stating the position applied for;
2) Duly accomplished Personal Data Sheet (CSC Form 212);
3) "1x1" picture (colored);
4) *Bar/Board Rating or CSC Certificate of Eligibility;
5) *Transcript of Records;
6) *Certificates of Seminars/Training Attended;
7) *Service Records or Certificates from previous/present employers stating the positions assumed and corresponding actual duties and responsibilities (if applicable);
8) *Performance Appraisal Reports for the last two rating periods (for current government employees only);
9) Statement duly signed by the applicant as to any relative(s) within the fourth degree of consanguinity or affinity, currently employed with the Office of the Ombudsman.

*Where photocopies are filed, the documents must be certified as true copies by the proper authorities or the applicant may present the originals to the Human Resource Management Officer for comparison with the photocopies.

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PCCI ANNUAL MEETING

OF VOTING MEMBERS & ELECTION OF OFFICERS
2:00 PM, 20 May 2006
Lakandula Function Room
Sulo Hotel, Quezon City
Deadline for submission of proxies
5:00 PM, 15 May 2006
at the PCCI Office

Tepi postgrad course on Endocrinology set

IN KEEPING WITH ITS RESPONSIBILITY TO EDUCATE AND UPDATE clinicians practicing in the different parts of the country about common endocrine diseases, the Thomasian Endocrine Progress, Inc. (TEPI), an organization of all the graduates of the two-year subspecialty training program of the Section of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism of the University of Santo Tomas Hospital, will conduct the 6th post-graduate course on April 20-21 at the Marco Polo Hotel in Davao City. To be conducted in coordination with the Davao Medical Society and the Philippine Academy of Family Physicians – Davao Chapter, the course is one of the four currently accredited training programs in the country under TEPI's mother organization, the Philippine Society of Endocrinology and Metabolism (PSEM) which has been vigilantly playing its vital role of maintaining high standards of training, research, board certification, basic and continuous medical education and updates extended to endocrinologists. Established in 2001, TEPI is composed of 27 alumni who are practicing in various areas of the country and the entire endocrine consultant staff involved in the training program at the UST Hospital. Among the endocrine and metabolic diseases, diabetes mellitus is the most prevalent, followed by goiter and abnormal cholesterol metabolism. There are approximately 175 endocrinologist-specialists throughout the country with complete intensive two-year fellowship training – a number not enough to cover a population of 80 million.

Rizalian Batch 90 general assembly

RIZALIAN BATCH90 Association Inc. invites all Rizal High School Batch '90 graduate to a general assembly on April 22, Saturday, 5pm. at the RHS Alumni Hall, Caniogan, Pasig City. For details and inquiries please call Lilliemer Manalo at 0922-809-5405 or Eugene Espinosa at 0917-735-9605. Relive the fun, reminisce the moments and share the vision.

Panaad sa Negros Festival

Pana-ad Park and Sports Complex, Bacolod City
April 22-30, 2006

Theme: **Tatak Negros**
(Proudly Negros-Made)

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CreamSilk
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PROVINCE OF NEGROS OCCIDENTAL OFFICIAL SEAL

PANAAD SA NEGROS
Schedule of Activities

Pag-uyyon Negros Foundation, Inc.

APRIL 21 FRIDAY (PRE-PANAAD EVENTS)

7:00 a.m.	Panaad Tour of Negros (Cycling): Sipalay - Bacolod, !75 km (NOCFED); April 22 – DSB-San Carlos 70 km; April 23 – San Carlos-Silay-Panaad 150 km
8:00 a.m.	Mobile Passporting & Info Advocacy (2F Stadium, North & South Wings)
7:00 p.m.	Superferry-Sponsored Concert (Panaad Stadium) Featuring: FREESTYLE Band

APRIL 22 SATURDAY DAY 1

6:00 a.m,	Hataw sa Panaad with Ching (Football Field)
8:00 a.m.	Thanksgiving Mass (2F Stadium, Center)
9:00 a.m.	Signing of MOA on OFW Helpline (2F, Stadium) Opening Ceremonies for: * Theme Pavilions/Trade Fair (Panaad Grounds, 10 a.m. Daily) * Organic Food Festival (G/F Stadium, North Wing, 10 a.m. Daily) * Festival Costumes & Photo Exhibit (G/F Stadium, 10 a.m. Daily) * Garden Show (Panaad Grounds, 10 a.m. Daily) 2nd Day Mobile Passporting & Information Advocacy (2F Stadium) PYDC-PHO Bloodletting (Clinic, GF, Stadium)
10:00 a.m.	Inauguration of Korean-Negros Occ., Philippines Friendship Building/ Provincial Veterinary Training Center (Gatuslao St.-North Capitol Road)
1:00 p.m.	"Best of Festival Dances" Competition (Stadium Grounds)
4:00 p.m.	Opening Ceremony (Stadium) Fireworks Display
8:00 p.m.	PINOY BIG BROTHER SHOW @ Panaad (Stadium) Featuring: First Batch Housemates & MS. KEANNA REEVES, Big Winner, Celebrity Edition

APRIL 23 SUNDAY DAY 2

6:00 a.m.	Hataw sa Panaad with Ching (Football Field)
11:00-12nn	ABS-CBN's "AMIGA" @ Panaad
1:00 p.m.	Opening of Panaad Derby (Covered Court)
2:00 p.m.	Finish Line Ceremony for Panaad Negros Tour (Park Stage)
4:00 p.m.	National Dog Agility Competition - K9/Dog Show (Stadium Grounds)
8:00 p.m.	Pop Dance Showdown (Stadium) PCL Night (Park Stage)

APRIL 24 MONDAY DAY 3

6:30-7 a.m.	ABS-CBN's "THE MORNING SHOW" @ Panaad
8:00 a.m.	Chess Tournament (3rd Floor Meeting Room, up to April 27) Volleyball (Softball Field, up to April 27)
1:00 p.m.	2nd Day of Panaad Derby (Covered Court) Taekwondo (2nd Floor South Wing up to April 25)
4:00 p.m.	Folk Dance Competition (Park Stage)
8:00 p.m.	CONCERT: CUESHE (Stadium)

APRIL 25 TUESDAY DAY 4

8:00 a.m.	Athletics (Track Oval, up to April 28)
1:00 p.m.	3rd Day & Championship, Panaad Derby (Covered Court) Boxing (Cabana Area, up to April 28, 2pm)
2:00 p.m.	Banda Diri, Banda Didto (Secondary Level)
6-6:30 p.m.	ABS-CBN's "TV PATROL BACOLOD" @ Panaad
7:00 p.m.	Negros Songfest: Original Ilonggo Composition (Park Stage)
9:00 p.m.	Best of Negros Cultural Performances (Stadium)

APRIL 26 WEDNESDAY DAY 5

8:00 a.m.	UPLBAA Annual Organic Farming Seminar (2nd Level, Stadium) LGU Swimming (Panaad Swimming Pool up to April 27)
7:00 p.m.	"Negros Pop Idol" / Negros Songfest, Interpretation (Park Stage)
9:00 p.m.	Technical Run: Lin-ay sang Negros (Stadium)

APRIL 27 THURSDAY DAY 6

8:00 a.m.	Panaad Livelihood Skills Competition (TESDA, 2F, Stadium)
1:00 p.m.	Organic Vegetable Seminar (2F, Stadium)
5:00 p.m.	Latin Dance Sport Competition (Multi-Purpose Gym, Capitol)
8:00 p.m.	Lin-ay sang Negros Pre-Pageant & Talent Night (Stadium)

APRIL 28 FRIDAY DAY 7

8:00 a.m.	2nd Negros Panaad National Age-Group Swim Fest (Panaad Pool up to April 29)
9:00 a.m.	Capitol Employees Pep Squad Competition (PACE - Covered Court) Tractor Derby (Back of Cabanas/Former Horse-Back Riding Area)
1:00 p.m.	Vice Mayor's League of the Philippines 16th National Convention Opening Ceremony (Bacolod Convention Plaza Hotel)
7:00 p.m.	Capitol Employees' Night (PACE –Covered Court)
8:00 p.m.	UNILEVER-Sponsored Concert (Stadium) Featuring: Bamboo Band, Yasmien Kurdi, Jerome Sala, Chris Lawrence, Tata Villaroel & Jimmy Marquez

APRIL 29 SATURDAY DAY 8

6:00 a.m.	Hataw sa Panaad with Ching (Football Field) Mambukal Team Relay
8:00 a.m.	Panaad Golf Competition (VMLP – NOGCC/Marapara up to April 30) Panaad Shoot Fest (Camp Montelibano up to April 30) BMX Competition (Panaad Tennis Court)
9:00 a.m.	Tractor Derby (Back of Cabanas/Former Horse-Back Riding Area) 50th RP-Japan Friendship Year (Ishiwata Bath House, Mambukal)
11:00 – 12nn	ABS-CBN's "SABADO BARKADA" (Live Point)
8:00 p.m.	Lin-ay sang Negros Pageant (Stadium) Hosted by: TJ MANOTOC Guests: 2005 Miss International PRECIOUS LARA QUIGAMAN H.E. RYUICHIRO YAMAZAKI, Japanese Ambassador to RP

APRIL 30 SUNDAY DAY 9

6:00 a.m.	Hataw sa Panaad with Ching (Football Field)
9:00 a.m.	Seafoods & Fruits Festival (Panaad Grounds)
3:00 p.m.	Closing Ceremony with Presentation of Winners (Stadium) Fireworks Display
8:00 p.m.	MUSICAL-COMEDY SHOW: ALLAN K. w/ TERI ONOR (Stadium)
11:00 p.m.	Panaad Coordinators' Night (Balay Kalamay)

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3 YEAR

Some foreign banks violate agri-agra lending rule

Branch network seen too limited

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS SAID certain foreign banks operating in the country might have violated the mandatory lending provision of the Agri-Agra Law.

This provision requires banks to lend to the agriculture and agrarian sectors 25 percent of their loan portfolio.

A top BSP official said some foreign banks, given their limited branch network, would rather pay the monetary penalty for non-compliance to the agri-agra rule than devote a quarter of their portfolio to this sector.

During the Monetary Board meeting yesterday, a P2.5 million monetary penalty on a foreign bank was discussed. The BSP, however, refused to name the bank.

The BSP official said some banks found it easier to shoulder the fines given the higher risks of lending to the farm sector, especially for foreign banks which usually focus on corporate and high-net worth individual accounts.

Aside from their limited branch network, the foreign banks' compliance to the agri-agra law was also being constrained by their concentration in urban areas.

In general, commercial banks are reluctant to pump in more funds to the farm sector, citing difficulty in scouting for viable borrowers.

Universal and commercial banks resort to alternative measures, such as those provided by Republic Act No. 7721, to fully comply with the rule.

RA 7721, which liberalized the entry of foreign banks, considers development loans—such as those extended to educational institutions and hospitals—as alternative compliance to the agri-agra mandatory lending provision.

Local Charm. International Appeal.

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FASHION

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
APPLES ABERIN-SADHWANI
AND JENNI EPPERSON

Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

Mommy! Want to get a
Travel Bag,
FREE?
See page C-3
Dry

BROWN-AND-BRONZE python bag (P999), bronze brocade slipons (P1,099), piled-on assorted multi-strand necklaces (P299 each), white-and-blue pearl bracelet (P299)

TAKING INSPIRATION FROM the classic Celso Ad Castillo movie, "Ang Pinakamagandang Hayop sa Balat ng Lupa," Wade's current campaign adds just the right touch of tropical drama to an already sizzling season. It resurrects the controversial white *kamison* and the "wet look" that were the fashion statement from steamy scenes of Tagalog movies from the 1970s.

"Pinakamagada" presented an .iconic image from the 1970s: an enigmatic woman in raw white riding a horse sans saddle on the seashore, or bathing in the sea against a setting sun.

Picking up the cinematic cue, Wade favors white in its summer campaign. White is perfect for showing off sexy, tanned legs. Wade makes them look sexier, with footwear awashed in earth tones like brown, tan, beige and chocolate—all perfect with white.

Flats step forward as the ultimate in summer chic. Whether strappy or in thongs, they are made hotter with faux gem embellishments.

Ankle-strapped espadrilles and wedges with cork or rope-trimmed heels also dominate summer's cool list.

Shoes are made more exciting with antique gold eyelets, studs, buckles, grommets and colored faux gem appliqués. Textured shoes made of rich fabrics in brocade and even faux snakeskin or lizard raise temperatures even higher.

Wade also has bags, belts, shades and jewelry. Bags make a bold statement in luxurious colored skins, particularly snakeskin or python. This season's collection also comes bewitchingly bejeweled. Gold, glittery or an-

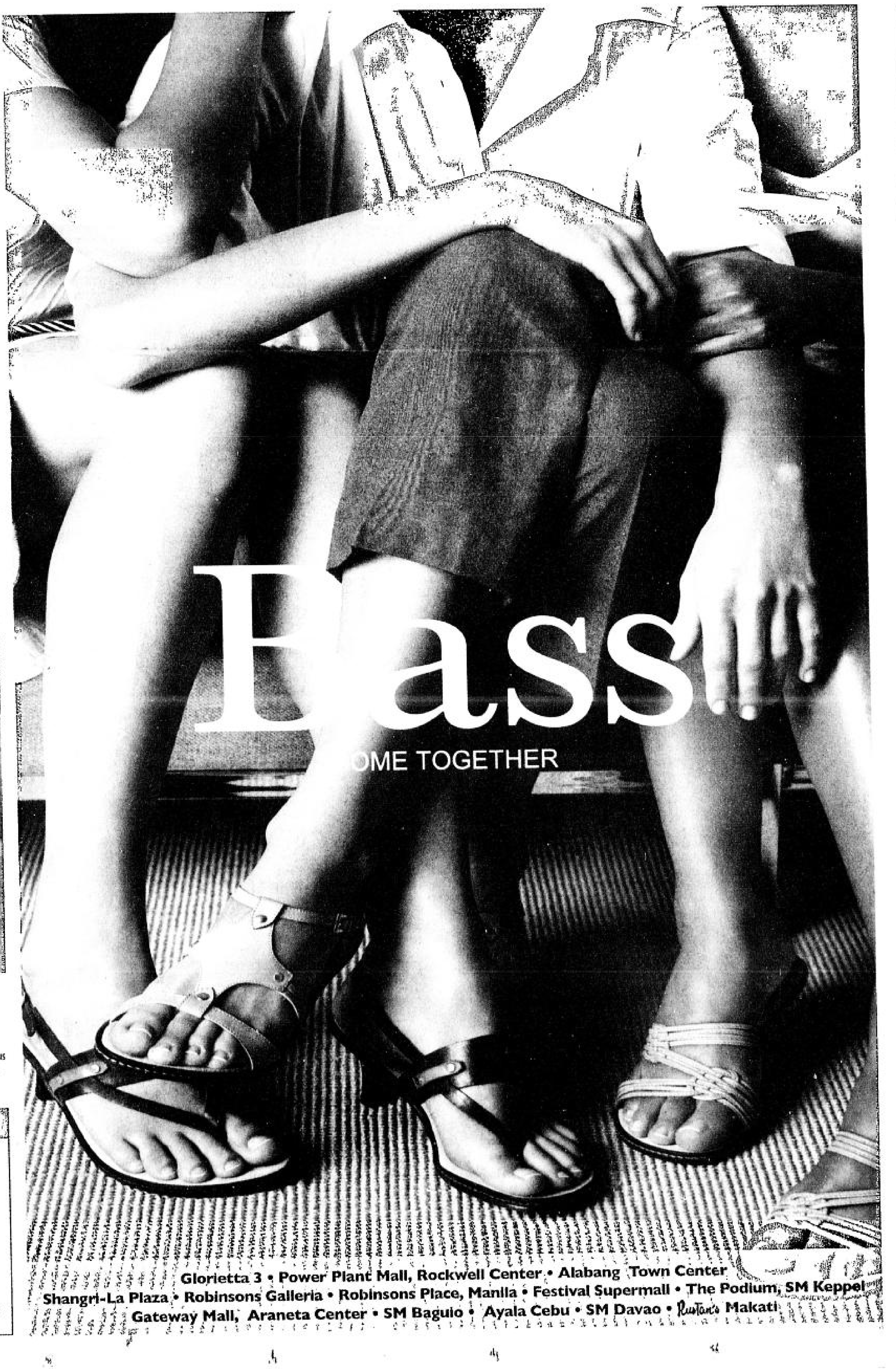
WET/C2

BLACK structural leather handbag (P999), double-strand beaded necklace (P299)

SHOES, BAGS, ACCESSORIES WADE
PHOTOGRAPHY KEN GO
ART DIRECTION MIKE DE GUZMAN (MGP)
STYLING GEORGE PALMIANO (MGP)
HAIR AND MAKEUP RED LOPEZ OF HAIRBYTES SALON EASTWOOD, LIBIS
MODELS AGATHA DE ALMEIDA AND PAOLO HAN OF T-MODELS
CLOTHES FOLDED & HUNG AND MGP
SHOT ON LOCATION AT MONTEMAR BEACH CLUB
IN BAGAC, BATAAN

IN THIS ISSUE

The best and the worst of Philippine Fashion Week /C4
From writer to fashion princess /C5
Inno Sotto's 'Secret Garden' /C6

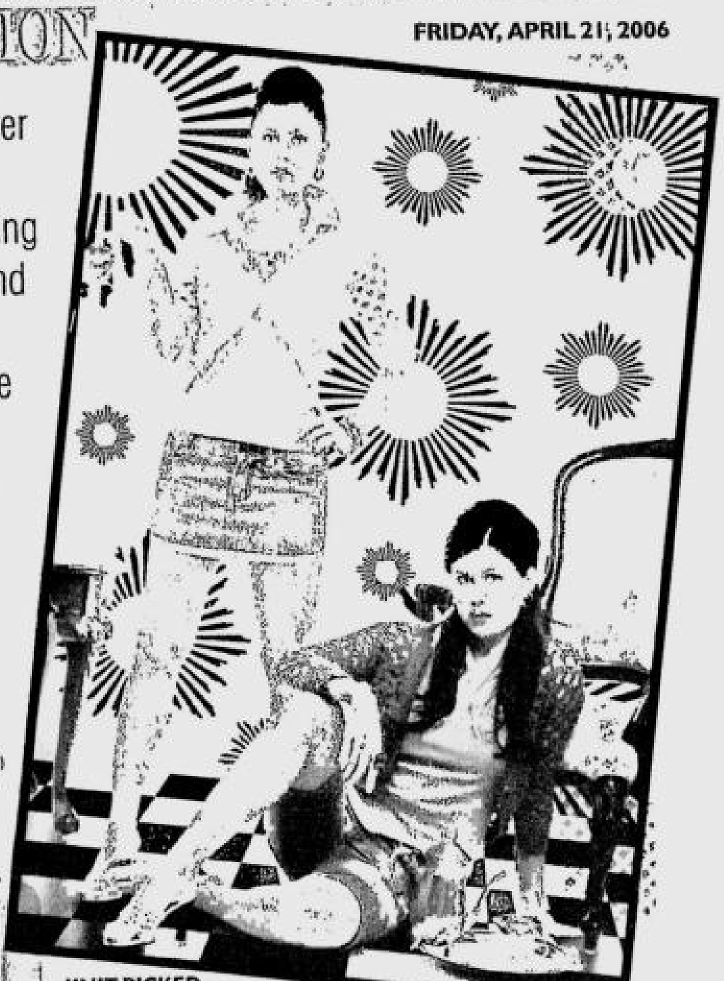


Glorietta 3 • Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center • Alabang Town Center
Shangri-La Plaza • Robinsons Galleria • Robinsons Place, Manila • Festival Supermall • The Podium, SM Keppel
Gateway Mall, Araneta Center • SM Baguio • Ayala Cebu • SM Davao • Rustan's Makati

HOT TEE. Tank tops in punchy colors paired with skinny capris and long-sleeved shirts are afternoon delights.

Call it The Power of Two—with Broadway darling Lea Salonga and new image model Danielle Cojuangco, Bayo puts the spotlight on The Great Filipina

PHOTOGRAPHY AND DIGITAL IMAGING DIX
STYLING KAT CRUZ OF BIG ON STYLE (BIG_ON_STYLE@YAHOO.COM)
HAIR AND MAKEUP AJ BAGUIO
MODEL NORA SZEMES OF ADMATE
CLOTHES BAYO



KNIT PICKED. Button-down shirt + tank top + crocheted cardigan = a three-way tie

DENIM SERVED. From seashore to street, bikini tops and cover-up shirts mixed with denims add urban appeal.

Tea for two

Jenni Epperson

GREEN MANGO AND *BAgoong*, *sago* and *gulaman*, Century tuna and rice—there are some things that just work well together, that don't make sense without the other.

I take my chamomile tea with milk and sugar, my French fries with Knorr seasoning and mayo, and I have the two best assistants in the world, Kat and Maureen.

Call it The Power of Two (sing with me now, "so we're okay, we're fine…")—just like the new billboard campaign of Bayo, which features Broadway darling Lea Salonga and Danielle Cojuangco, the newest face of the clothing line. It's like hitting two gems with one store!

"Bayo" in Ilonggo means "dress," and since 1992, the brand has been doing just that—dressing up today's Filipina with classic pieces in yummy colors. Along the way, it has become a staple in every fashionista's closet, evolving into a brand we are proud to call Filipino.

And with its image models, Bayo is just as eager to put the spotlight on The Great Filipina. Lea Salonga, whose portrayal of Kim in Miss Saigon had countless little girls crooning about solo saxophones and longing for that perfect cheongsam, established Bayo as a frontrunner in the local retail industry.

Today, Danielle Cojuangco, a 20-year-old straight-A Industrial Engineering major (at Stanford, no less) and accomplished equestrienne (complete with an individual gold medal at an international comp), with an impressive pedigree at that (granddaughter of Danding Cojuangco), is the new Bayo girl. And, oh, did I mention she's quite the head-turner?

These two great gals in their great billboards show the fun, fresh and relaxed styles of Bayo. But they're not the only showstoppers that proprietress Corcor Bitong have got up her sleeve.

Her Bayo Kids tees have become a phenomenon, what with their rainbow colors and witty statements like "legally spoiled," "save your drama for your mama" and "drink responsively" with a milk carton photo on it… Super cute!

Kids, especially my daughter Aryanna, can't get enough of it. Even grownups with kids' size figures (not fair!) have become the biggest hoarders of these tot tees. I think it's about time Bayo makes some for grownup fashion babies.

Something fun, something classic. Something for the baby, something for the lady: Bayo has come up with a great combination that's got the style minions trooping to its stores, mixing and matching to their heart's delight—not to mention that baby-powder scent that emanates from the stores!

Truly fresh, fun and Filipina.

E-mail author jfashion@inquirer.com.ph

BAYO image models Lea Salonga and Danielle Cojuangco

A splash of cover-ups

APPLES' PICKINGS

Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

BEACH-AHOLICS, FASHIONistas and stylish sun goddesses rejoice!

Thanks to FandH Beach, you now have a fresh pick of glam cover-ups to complement those itsie-bitsie bikinis or chic, cut-out maillots. Half the fun of going to the beach is building a fab wardrobe that will make you stand out from the maddening *sarong*-clad crowd. Folded and Hung's collection of chic beachwear provides you with the best opportunity to do so.

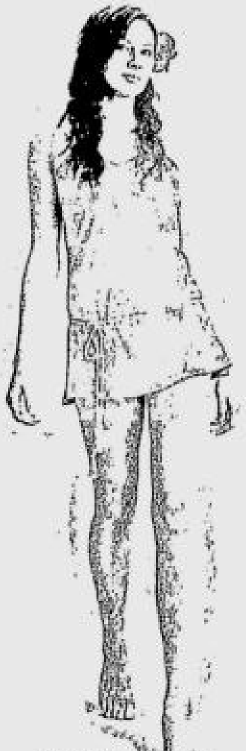
The collection is for women like you, who are always on the lookout for that perfect, fashionable foil to disguise their flaws and accentuate their best features. Not everyone's born with Giselle's long, cellulite-free legs and slim, toned body, after all.

The collection of beach cover-ups, which is inspired by '50s glamorous screen goddess Grace Kelly in the classic movie "High Society," will surely make any woman shine like a superstar. Take your pick from adorable little hibiscus embroidered terrycloth robes, dramatic chiffon blousons, seriously sexy togas or graphic zebra-print tunics.

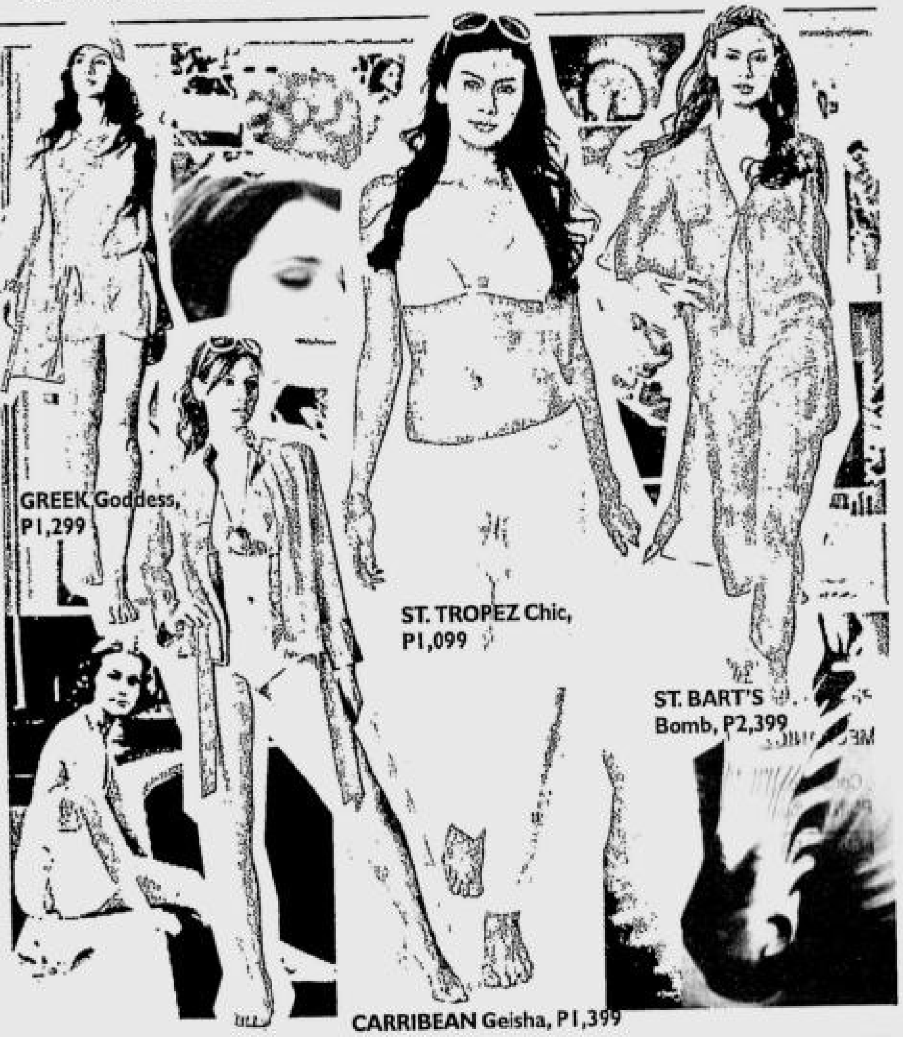
The best part about these cover-ups is that you can wear most of them from the beach to the streets. So, you get real value for your hard-earned bucks. Match any of these pieces with tank tops, city shorts, leggings or ubiquitous blue jeans. All you need is a little imagination and derring-do.

As always, choose a cover-up that complements your personality. It's also important to pick one that provides just the right amount of coverage based on your comfort level. The ultimate goal, of course, is to look fashionably chic and uncontrived while covering-up imperfections. Self-consciousness will defeat the purpose of this sartorial exercise. So, dress or undress with conviction, if you please. A healthy dose of self-confidence is a must!

E-mail the author at afashion@inquirer.com.ph



TAHITI Tart, P699



GREEK Goddess, P1,299

ST. TROPEZ Chic, P1,099

ST. BART'S Bomb, P2,399

CARRIBEAN Geisha, P1,399

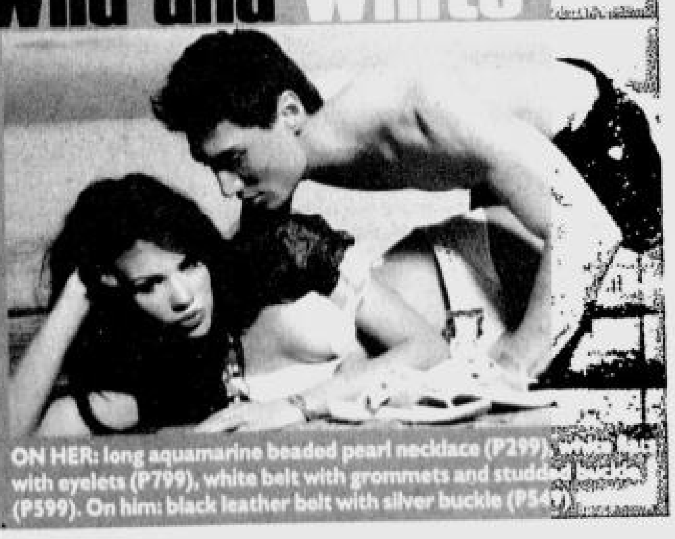
ON HIM: brown leather sandals (P1,399), assorted silver necklace used as chains (P149 each). On her: cream flat sandals with antique gold appliqué (P799), cream shoulder bag with embellishments (P899)

Wet and wild and white

From page C1

tiqued, is the color standard for accessories, be they piled-on necklaces, cuffs, bangles or earrings. Belts are just as ornamental—with studs, rivets, gold or bronze trims and faux jewels.

Wade branches are at 3/F, Glorietta 2, Ayala Center, Makati; G/L, Padre Faura Wing, Robinsons Place Manila; 3/L, East Wing, Robinsons Galleria; 2/L, Bldg. A, SM Megamall; 2/L, Annex Bldg., SM City North Edsa; The Shops, Unimart, Greenhills; G/F, Gaisano Mall of Davao; G/F, Ali Mall, Araneta Center; and G/L, Main Bldg.



ON HER: long aquamarine beaded pearl necklace (P299), with eyelets (P799), white belt with grommets and studd (P599). On him: black leather belt with silver buckle (P54

The long and short of it

ly one dressing room, models had to traverse the ramp's entire length and breadth twice before they could do a quick change. Therein lay the show's strengths as well as its dilemmas.

Unlike in "Beloved," where guests viewed Sotto's pieces on an elevated ramp inside a darkened ballroom, "Allegra" offered them the chance to examine the collection up close and personal. And due to the super-long ramp, models lingered in the spotlight much longer than they should.

If familiarity breeds contempt in a friendship, a vantage point as close, as well-lit and as extended as "Allegra"'s allowed the audience to get glimpses of certain unflattering details they shouldn't have seen (*tsismis* in fashion design parlance): pins on the lace; unhemmed and fraying hems; and dirt and debris from God knows where that clung stubbornly to the gowns' hems and trains.

Were some of the pieces rushed for the show?

Sotto said he had to resort to using pins in order to keep the expensive Chantilly lace in place. Sewing it to the gowns wasn't possible because some of the lace had already started to deteriorate with time. As for those unsightly dirt and debris, there was really nothing he could do about them.

"The gowns, which had a layer of tulle underneath, would really gather all sorts of stuff in the dressing room. In lieu of a carpeted floor, models had to walk on a dirt floor," he said.

To Sotto's ardent admirers, everything he says is taken as gospel truth. To his harshest critics, however, such an explanation probably borders on the *palusot*. We leave it up to you to decide.

But having covered two of Sotto's previous shows before "Allegra," I find his latest pieces a bit wanting compared to the grand and dramatic stuff he showed in "Beloved."

As far as chic factor goes, his current collection is several notches lower next to the snappy chiffon numbers he did in "Over the Moon."

The brilliant Sotto sets the fashion agenda, but he may become his own worst enemy. "Allegra" was a case of too little, too hurried.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

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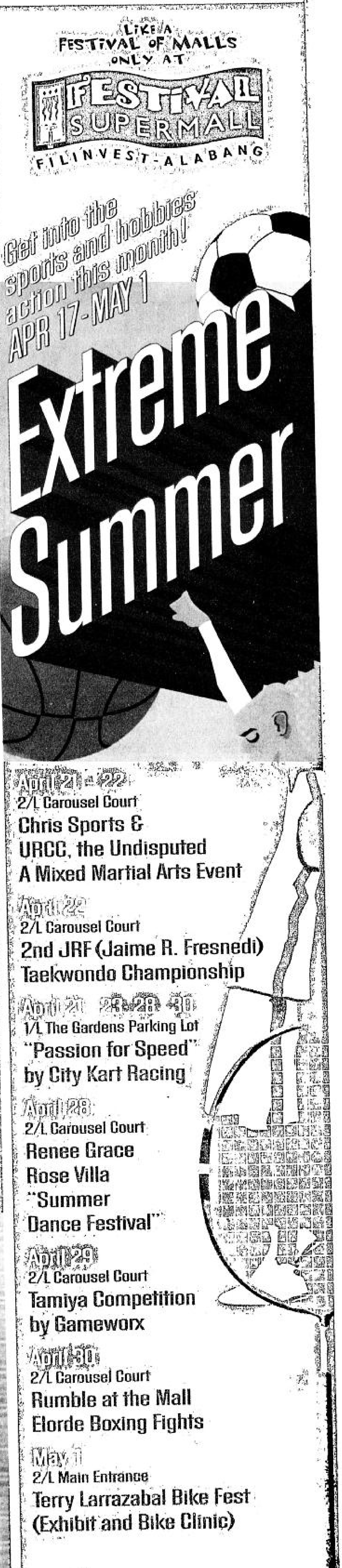

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THE BEST AND THE WORST OF PHILIPPINE FASHION WEEK

JUN Escario

MICH Dulce

VEEJAY Flores

TIPPI Ocampo

GARIMON Roferos

Fashion smorgasbord

Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

AFTER A CATASTROPHIC FIRST NIGHT, THE recently concluded Philippine Fashion Week was somewhat able to regain its shaky footing on Day 2 as it presented clothes from a smorgasbord of designers grouped under "New Generation."

There was no dearth of ideas as "New Generation" stalwarts Jun Escario, Tippi Ocampo, Garimon Roferos, Mich Dulce, Dexter Alazas, Aries Lagbat and M. Barretto came up with striking and surprisingly wearable pieces inspired by such elements as glorious sunsets, damp clothes, bold headlines, Boracay basics, window dressing and "men in Prozac."

By sticking to what he does best, Escario emerged as one of the evening's winners with a Red Carpet collection of billowy empire dresses made of Vietnamese silk and printed silk chiffon in such dramatic shades as orange, teal and taupe.

Brimming with characteristic confidence, the designer claimed to have invented a new technique that fused the relaxed empire silhouette (in front) with the more form-fitting serpentine shape (on the back). The look, which stayed away from major beadwork, was decidedly "expensive and glamorous," said Escario.

Playing safe

On the opposite end of the fashion spectrum, Ocampo played it safe with an RTW collection consisting of earth-colored dresses made of cotton, linen and silk jersey.

To achieve an illusion of softness akin to clothes being hung out to dry, she incorporated an overlay of stretched tulle to a number of pieces. She also added a bit of ruching and woven embellishments in the form of belts with huge buckles to keep predictability at bay.

M. (short for Manuel Mariano Martin and not Marjorie) Barretto also drew from his strength as one of F&H's in-house designers by producing handsome men's jackets and separates in soothing pastels and warm earth colors.

To break the monotony, he added a few floral shirts in neutral shades into the mix. The entire collection was reportedly inspired by "men in Prozac."

Fitting, however, was something Barretto needed to work on. Owing to a mix-up in the show's sequence, he said, a number of male models ended up wearing clothes not meant for them. Well, perhaps next time.

At last, Mich Dulce has grown up! Months after her aborted stay at Big Brother's house, the designer came up with smart and edgy cotton and wool separates in plain, pinstriped and printed (as in newsprint) materials.

After earning a reputation as an avant-garde talent adept at cutting and fabric manipulation, Dulce kept on producing almost the same "unfinished" clothes year in and year out. Well, not anymore.

Dulce's trademark draping and tucking were still very much evident. So was her ingenious use of flaps and extensions in the form of huge swags of fabrics. This time, however, her clothes managed to look polished yet edgy, mature yet far from dowdy.

For some strange reason, Regine Dulay's collection looked uncannily similar to Dulce's. It was unfortunate, however, that they came on the ramp one after the other, as the former's pieces suffered in comparison to the latter's.

Surprises came early from curtain raiser Aries Lagbat, who came up with his version of the close-open collection.

In lieu of dramatic capes that opened up to reveal larger-than-life beadwork à la Pitoy Moreno, Lagbat created mini dresses with either bubble skirts or capelets that could be turned into bags and what have you in the wink of an eye. That's what I call two looks for the price of one.

Davaoeño designers Roferos and Alazas proved that their Manila- and Cebu-based colleagues don't hold a monopoly on creativity. They can probably even run circles around certain overrated non-talents.

Roferos (he of the *terno* made of dried water lilies fame) derived inspiration from Boracay to fashion ruched and skimpy beachwear in earthy shades. But the real attractions were his accessories, including a carry-on luggage on wheels, again made of dried and woven water lilies.

Alazas displayed his expertise at draping via several chiffon and jersey numbers in contrasting neutral colors. In keeping perhaps with the sultry season, the collection was decidedly light and showed ample skin.

The entire show may not have shaken the local fashion scene to its foundations, but it was certainly a welcome respite from all the misplaced razzmatazz we had to endure from Gener Gozum and associates during the previous night.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

RAJO Laurel

TINA Daniac

ERIC de los Santos

KENNETH Chua

Faux luxe

Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Chito Vecina

ORGANIZERS OF Philippine Fashion Week billed their recent evening event also at the NBC Tent as "Luxe Wear." In truth, however, luxury was the last thing that came to my mind after going through the works of such names as Avel Bacudio, Eddie Castro and Protacio Empaces Jr.

Almost a decade after edgy club wear broke into the fashion scene, Bacudio was still hopelessly stuck on the unfinished and deconstructed look consisting of worn jeans with inverted flaps for pockets, track shorts-cum-pants (don't ask me how and why) and an iridescent corset.

You call these tattered and disjointed pieces luxury couture? Come on, even the neighborhood *ukay-ukay* can probably offer much better finds.

Castro, on the other hand, fashioned a "kiddie" ensemble of poorly tailored cotton separates adorned either with unfinished patchworks or pastel-colored corsets and obis. This marshmallow-meets-beggar look has no place even in the slums of Pleasantville.

Empaces offered a mixed bag of pretty dresses and badly conceptualized men's wear in the form of ill-fitting jackets paired with bermuda shorts and capri pants. For some strange reason, two of his male models carried unlikely props such as a flimsy Philippine flag and an old-fashioned *bayong*. *Sugod sa* nearest exit!

Am I being a bit too literal? After all, the use of supposedly chic materials is no guarantee that one would live up to the show's title. Those who had the misfortune of enduring Tina Daniac's atrocious wedding gowns should know.

Despite her use of such materials as chiffon, tulle, lace and feathers, the entire collection failed to soar beyond the realm of tacky (as in Baclaran-tacky).

I wouldn't be surprised if these "brides" were stood up by their grooms on the big day. Outlandish in proportions and garish in detailing, Daniac's dismal-fitting and poorly constructed gowns simply defied conventions.

Others, like brothers Popoy and Aztec Barba, were hampered by their decision to stick to line design. What was the point of coming up with various permutations of the same dresses using almost the same materials and techniques?

Jay Sustiguer was an "expert" in how not to make a suit and choose a model. The designer's snake-printed jacket had shoulders that were far too broad and sleeves that were way too long on the rather short, plain-looking male model.

The evening did produce a few exceptional pieces (or should we say moments) by the likes of Rajo Laurel, Kenneth Chua and Peter Lim (although he has to rein in his penchant for larger-than-life overlays). But as a whole, no particular designer was able to shine and capture the audience's attention and imagination beyond the time allotted to them.

In fact, consistency seemed to have eluded not a few of them, as no particular collection by any designer was breathtaking enough to earn special mention.

Surprise me not

Text by Cheche V. Moral
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

LYLE Ibañez

STEVE de Leon

EDGAR Allan

ALEX Bitong

"(NAME OF DESIGNER), IS that you?"

This is one of the more familiar whispered jokes you'd overhear when you're seated adjacent to writers at fashion shows. That's in reference, of course, to pieces sent on the runway that are oddly akin to a look already associated with some other designer.

While it's all said in good fun, the implications can be far more complex than a lighthearted dig among scribes. It can mean the designer in the spotlight is a copycat, or the designer being copied isn't worth duplicating at all. It can also mean the designer being copied is stuck in one look, good or bad, complacent that his clients—the missus, the *ginang*, the madam, as an insider calls them—would buy anyway, so why reinvent the *palda*? What do silly writers know?

Yes, what do silly writers know, except remember when the same design has been tirelessly shown over and over again, save for a different fabric here, a new button there. What do silly writers know but say their piece when a designer fails to evolve, either by commercial choice or by—let's say it—sheer lack of taste or talent. What do silly writers know but type away madly when a collection unfolds into a comical travesty on the runway.

Indignation

When these go to print, they are countered not with a better collection at the next show (which is our point, by the way), but by vexed indignation. It's cyclical and never ending. Though we like to be surprised.

At the Grand Allure Collection presented by Sony Handycam on the fifth day of the 2006 Philippine Fashion Week, Alex Bitong opened with fringed or tiered ruffled white dresses that were pretty if overwrought at times.

Barge Ramos presented several of his usual resort wear. But his piece de resistance was a lone simple black-and-white dress-cut not to close to the body, elegant yet easy even for slightly more robust frames.

Lyle Ibañez had several sexy pieces—a long dress with the silhouette of a singlet, a sleek empire gown, a shorter piece with a deep neckline—though their slinky silhouettes may be hard to pull off by mortals of less-than-supermodel proportions.

Edgar Allan seemed to have had the same red-carpet aspirations in mind, if the circus had a red carpet. Why he appended clouds of tulle and DayGlo cutouts into his gowns was beyond reason, except to create fluorescent distractions to the clothes' decidedly trite silhouettes.

The usually delightful Larry Espinosa had a slew of dresses that harked back to the Disco '70s. Not oddly enough, the clothes also seemed like costumes for the currently popular TV celebrity dance contests. Nholie Viñeza, meanwhile, dressed his models like harem concubines with belly-baring tops and lace panels for skirts. Strangely, we didn't spot Middle Eastern buyers in the audience.

Oliver Tolentino went *way* over the top, draping layers upon multicolored layers of chiffon for skirts, beaded pleated bodices and disconcertingly askew wired jewel neckpieces. To top it off—he had extra fabric, so what!—he attached a large square of printed material at the back of each piece.

One designer refashioned a popular China-made *kumot* into jackets for men and women's wrap top and pants. His bride wore an empire dress made of embroidered white fabric with scalloped edges. The fabric was actually a table linen in its previous life. Neat!

Steve de Leon, was that you?

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THE BEST AND THE WORST OF PHILIPPINE FASHION WEEK

PATTY Eustaquio

DONG Omaga Diaz

FERDIE Abuel

YVONNE Quisumbing-Romulo

JAMES Reyes

LOUIS Claparols

JOEY Samson

Overwrought but interesting

Text by Cheche V. Moral
Photos by Chito Vecina

THERE THEY WERE, A cocktail of pleats and folds, tucks or smooth seams, in subdued solids and nude tones, as if to mollify senses knotted frantic from that horrid squall of sequins, nauseating layers of tulle and chimp's potassium feast from the opening night of the Philippine Fashion Week 2006 four nights before.

If that were the intent, the 14 members of the Young Designers Guild who presented at the Wella-sponsored Young Avant-Garde Collection succeeded to a good extent. Save for some rather safe (ergo, boring) and a few overwrought detailing—yes, too many fabric treatments in one dress, even sans gaudy beadwork, can be too much for the senses—the YDG's pocket collections were proof that, indeed, there is hope for Philippine fashion design.

Joey Samson is one of the few names who are steadily gaining respect for the craft, and it's a reputation that he doesn't seem to be taking lightly. First he sent a variation of men's deconstructed jackets with matching breeches or abbreviated pants. The charm of Samson's design is in the details, so that a pair of shorts is never just a pair of shorts—a front flap, for instance, is cut into overlap, to conceal the zipper.

With an audience that was by majority on the lookout for women's clothes, it was refreshing that Samson's menswear collection would receive perhaps the biggest applause of the evening—one that came after sending Joan Bitagcol in cummerbund and trousers, and Ria Bolivar in a belted mocha men's coat.

LZ Punzalan

JOHN Herrera

MEL Vergel de Dios

Spillovers

Like Samson, Yvonne Quisumbing-Romulo also stuck to what she does best—cargo pants and beaded tops of re-sewn strips of silk, though the first two pieces of the latter seemed to be spillovers of her previous outings. She, however, sent interesting leather-paneled skirts.

Romulo's designs are reportedly among the bestsellers at Fibre boutique (which sells YDG's designs), second only to Ivarluski Aseron (who didn't show at the PFW this year owing to his workload). And while we think she's sticking to a formula that spoke to her market, we had hoped to see more than strips of leather and fastenings, in lieu of beads, to update her designs.

James Reyes, one of the more experimental young designers, seemed to have let his imagination run amuck with the dourest collection of the evening. His all-black collection spoke volumes—literally—with, say, a top made entirely of ruffles, sleeves that extended to the ankles, a floor-length shirtdress, cuffed long skirts, caped shirts.

There's no questioning Reyes' talent, though we wonder how this collection would sit with the market. It's true that his Japanese sensibilities aren't for the faint-hearted, but this time it looked like he had gotten a tad too self-indulgent.

Brian Leyva, John Herrera and Louis Claparols came up with wearable, even pretty, pieces. It looked, however, that the three fell prey to the same weakness—that is, lumping all they knew of fabric manipulation into some of their pieces. Nothing that some prudent editing can't fix, of course, because this new breed evidently *knows* how to make clothes. It's subtlety they need to work on.

In contrast, LZ Punzalan, Mitzi Quilendrino, Reian Mata and newcomer Ferdie Abuel were a tad too safe, with the latter showing basic, if commercial, pieces—long-sleeved floral shirts and a playsuit, brown satin shorts and tops with ruffled necklines, and a plain shirred skirt. While Punzalan's three flowy gowns were his saving graces, Abuel could've done without his two Grecian gowns at the end; they were out of place.

> The Young Designers Guild's pocket collections were proof that, indeed, there is hope for Philippine fashion design

All-white

The petite Patty Eustaquio has down pat women of her size with an all-white collection that either had her familiar short ruffled sleeves, showed hints of skin at the back, or short geometric dresses to show off Pilates-toned gams.

Dong Omaga Diaz had cropped sailor jackets and bloomers for women, soft in cream and pale blue brocade, and matador capes and jackets for the men in the same material.

GETTING all glammed up by Lourd and Lou of Emphasis

I WANTED to ask if he had a girlfriend. I never did!

RHETT'S shredded top swished and swayed as I walked with handsome Derek. You should see him *without* this white Tyler polo in the TV series "Panday."

NOTHING but front-row seats at the Fashion Week gala for the "celebrity couple." Hah!

Memoirs of a makeover

Text by Allison W. Lopez
Photos by Ryan Lim

"WHAT WAS I THINKING?" I asked myself not a few times at a special coverage for Fashion Week. The assignment: to write about me, myself, and my makeover for our "celebrity for a day" story.

As celebrities usually grace fashion shows and add their own glitter to the event, the INQUIRER Fashion team thought of trying to make one just for the Fashion Week gala.

And it's not your usual makeover. To add spice, they picked a writer to chronicle what it was like to be on the other side of the fence.

I became the guinea pig, a very nervous guinea pig.

Prima donna

Like a real prima donna, I arrived fashionably late for our 2 p.m. calltime at Emphasis Salon in Rockwell, Makati—though not on purpose as I had just come from my brother's graduation. After apologizing profusely to stylist Millet Arzaga, I was immediately shampooed and massaged so I could relax and take it easy. (I couldn't.)

A salon to the stars, Emphasis brimmed with society A-listers that Friday, including our very own Sea Princess Tessa Valdes, who teased me about my "date" Derek Ramsey.

I was only too happy to know that Lourd Ramos was doing my hair (his name had become familiar). He was young, sassy and savvy—just my type of stylist. He quickly asked what I'd be wearing, so I showed him the shredded Grecian-inspired black top by Rhett Eala. He immediately knew what kind of look I needed to match the fringed outfit.

Lourd decided to cut my hair because the layers were already out of shape. He assured me he'd maintain the length.

Now that my hair had more volume, Lourd passed me on to assistant JP, who put warm curlers on my head to create luscious waves. I had long wanted curls (that's why I was growing my hair long), and I was about to have it!

Makeup artist Lou Bunyi began prepping my face so she could apply the base. As I had prominent dark circles that time, she put quite a lot of concealer to cover the unsightly things. A good base, she said, is the most important thing in makeup to create a flawless look.

Using Body Shop's Spring/Summer makeup, Lou created smoky blue eyes and pale pink lips—perfect for the nighttime event at the Fort.

Afterward, Lourd and JP unleashed the huge curls and tamed it with a Tigi spray that had a fruity scent. Yum! Lourd then made a half-ponytail for a less formal but still romantic look.

Prince Charming

Tall, dark and handsome Derek arrived and was prepped a bit for the shoot, while fairy godmother Millet helped me get into my top. It looked great with slim Tyler pants, with the big ribbon on my back and the tassels cleverly covering my *puson*. Plus, it was my first time to wear "couture"!

Still it took me a lot of guts to go out of the restroom looking so made up and totally unlike my tee-and-jeans self.

Then it was time for our "paparazzi" shots. It felt weird directing our photographer how to take pictures of us. Derek looked perfectly fine even with bystanders scoping us out on the bench, while I felt awkward. We chatted a bit about his Frisbee team, his role in "Panday," and his beer commercial with Kris Aquino while our very own paparazzo hounded us.

At 6, we slipped into Derek's classy Benz for the short ride to NBC Tent. The show was at 6:30, with the who's who of the Philippine fashion scene sure to be there. Gulp.

After raising eyebrows and piquing curiosities ("Who's that girl with Derek?" or more accurately, as reported to me by my godmothers, "*Sila ba ni* Derek?"), we watched the show with a great view from our front-row, near-the-ramp's-edge seats. Now that's privilege.

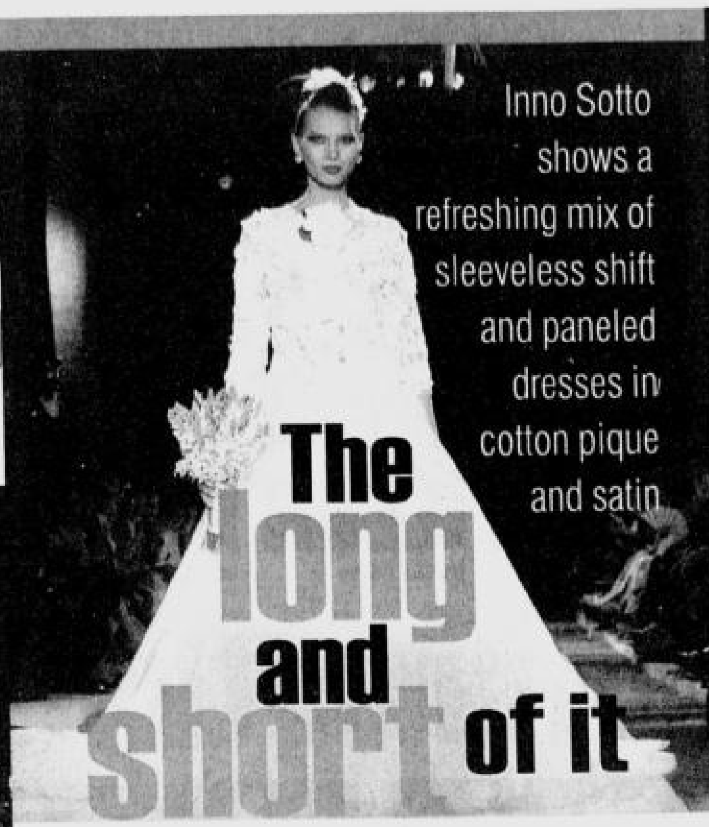
> The assignment: to write about me, myself and my transformation into a fashion princess, complete with Derek Ramsey as a date

Comfort zone

Some people are meant to be in the limelight, while some are meant to report about the people in it. My shyness never really wore off, and I was only too glad to morph back into the real me soon after. But it's nice though to step out of your comfort zone once in a while and experience the trappings of being a celeb.

Treat yourself out for a day in the salon and get pampered all the way. Feel the beauty of a made-to-order outfit from our many talented designers. Look your best every day even when there are no paparazzi following you—because looking good does make you feel good.

And when your 15 minutes of fame does come, take it from Derek: Don't let it go to your head!



The long and short of it

Inno Sotto shows a refreshing mix of sleeveless shift and paneled dresses in cotton pique and satin

Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

WITHOUT A DOUBT, fashion designer Inno Sotto remains at the top of his game. But like many successful and prolific artists, he may slowly become a victim of his own success.

Sotto's latest fashion show, an outdoor affair in a lush and secluded area of the Ugarte Field in Makati, offered the country's bejeweled set (who gamely stewed in their formal finery amid the sweltering April heat) a number of firsts.

Although he had staged several open-air shows in the past, his recent foray was the biggest (56 pieces of daywear, cocktail dresses and huge gowns) since he staged "Beloved" late last year. The show had a long title—hold your breath—"Allegra: Under the Pink Sky of the Secret Garden." It had an equally long runway that spanned 281 feet from end to end.

"Since I wouldn't be able to do this in a ballroom," said Sotto. "I decided to go all out with a long ramp."

He chose the hot month of April instead of cool January to stage his outdoor spectacle because of the erratic weather. Even then, Sotto was still on tenterhooks as the big night drew near.

"There was no Plan B had it rained," he said later. "I couldn't put up a canopy since it would ruin the show's very intent. I just hoped for the best and asked the nuns to pray for me."

In fairness to the designer, his show offered a refreshing mix of sleeveless shift and paneled dresses in cotton pique and raw silk. Apart from his trademark coatdresses, Sotto also fashioned a number of separates consisting of short skirts and slim pants paired with bandeaus peeking out from open jackets.

The Manila Polo Club-meets-Amanpulo look was decidedly meant for the rich and the slim, as the voluminous gowns were meant for full-figured women.

"Since there was nothing to frame the pieces in an open-air venue," said Sotto, "I had to come up with much bigger clothes so they wouldn't look puny and pathetic."

No matter the dresses' form, however, one visual flourish constantly drew the audience's attention: flowery cutouts made from the same material as the outfit and attached either to its back, sleeves, shoulders or chest.

After all these years, Sotto remains a master at investing a material as modest as pique with his own brand of magic. By tapping into his mastery of technique and tempering it with his characteristic restraint (a tough balancing act), he was able to turn such seemingly simple dresses into a striking and expensive-looking collection.

Sotto, who purposely shied away from using embroidery and beadwork, drew inspiration from the *kiping* (colorful and decorative rice wafers from Quezon) to arrive at such an embellishment.

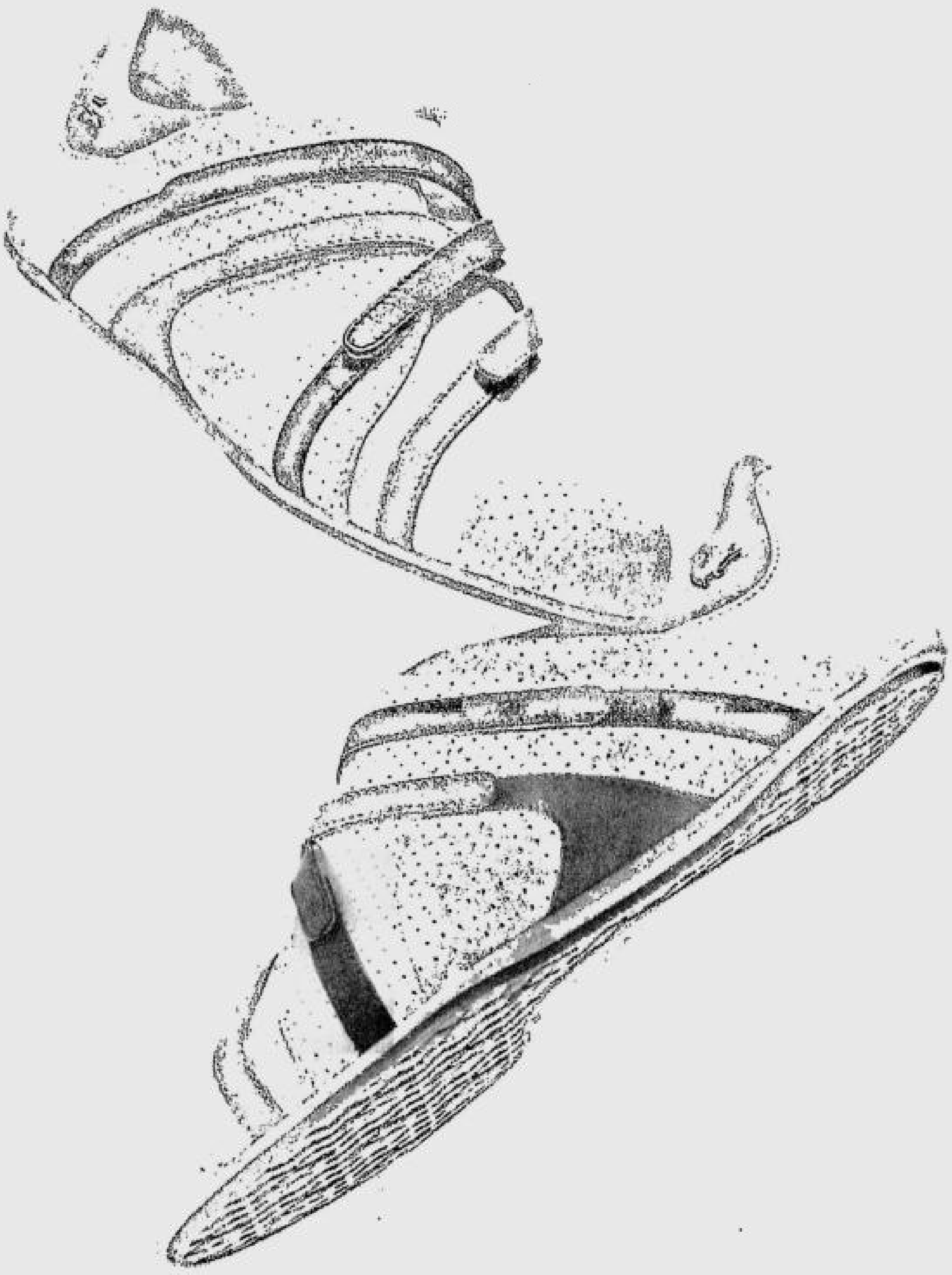
Light

Eschewing beadwork wasn't so much an attempt to pander to the young, he insisted, but more a way of being more responsive to his clientele. In keeping with the sultry season, he purposely kept his collection, including his formal, empire-waisted gowns made from layers of damask, organdy, organza and lace, light.

The same rule, however, didn't apply to his guests. But knowing how Filipinos don't know how to dress down, Sotto might have a point in insisting that everybody dress to the nines.

Since there was on-

THE LONG/ C3



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FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 2006
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
D1
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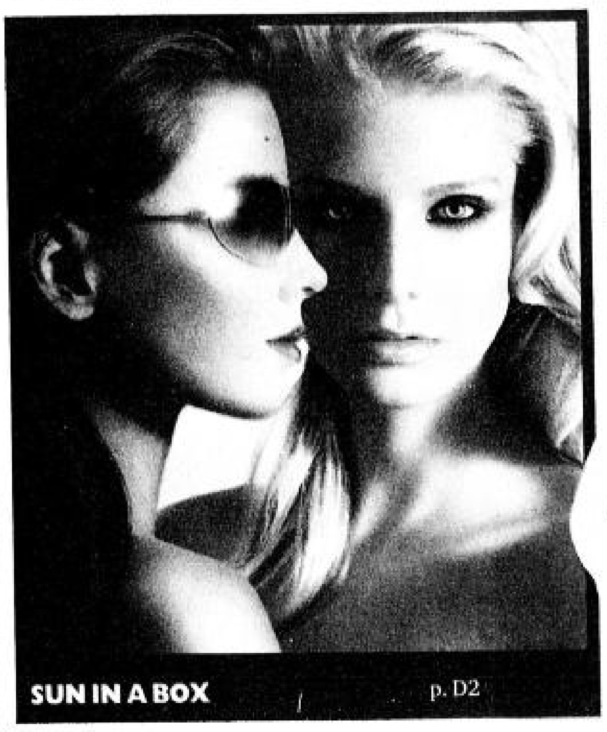
BEAUTY

HAIR TRENDS p. D2



SUN IN A BOX p. D2

VERT à la MENTHE
green tea with mint

PRODUCT BAZAAR p. D3

Atty. Albert B. Arcilla: feeling safe with Gold in his pocket

BPI Express Credit
Gold

He has yet to spend all 365 days of one year in the country. His job would fly him out at least four times a year. Likewise, personal journeys would land him in shores beyond ours.

As president of Viking Cars Philippines, the local distributor of Volvo, Atty. Albert B. Arcilla needs to travel frequently to the car company's mother hub in Sweden. At certain times, Atty. Arcilla would be required to visit Volvo's other offices in Germany, Switzerland and France. On the other hand, destinations such as the US and Canada and various Asian cities are reserved for personal visits.

In all his trips, his credit cards have become travel essentials, providing him with much-needed convenience. But in some of his past journeys, these same cards became sources of what all cardholders fear the most: fraudulent transactions.

It was in his personal travels that Atty. Arcilla had fallen victim to credit card con… twice. Upon his arrival from Hong Kong, his local card company informed him that his card number was used to purchase a top-of-the range sound system from a store in the crown colony. Then, during a stay in Tokyo, another card of his was used to make luxury purchases from a store he never shopped in.

To a frequent traveler like Atty. Arcilla, the possibility of identity theft can be very unsettling. And to this very day, it still exists and remains widespread, especially in Europe which to someone like Atty. Arcilla is a mandated destination.

It was therefore a tremendous relief when Atty. Arcilla found out that BPI Gold MasterCard has come out with the PaySafe System. It is the country's first EMV-compliant chip card that provides the cardholder superior security against fraudulent card transactions.

"This new facility is an expected service from a bank like BPI", says Atty. Arcilla. A BPI cardholder long before the launch of BPI Gold MasterCard's PaySafe System, Atty. Arcilla has always known BPI as an institution with an unbroken history of trust and trailblazing services. Even before the arrival of the chip card, Atty. Arcilla's relationship with his BPI card was never marred by any fraudulent incidences. But the new chip technology reinforces the trust that Atty. Arcilla has long called the "silent benefit" of any BPI credit card. He says, "With my BPI Gold MasterCard, I know I have something in my wallet that I can trust to protect me wherever I go."

His great satisfaction as a BPI Gold MasterCard cardholder goes beyond the anti-fraud protection he receives from the card's new facility. He is also very much pleased with his card's other features. BPI credit cards' wide acceptance abroad is one feature from where he derives much convenience as a world traveler.

A card as valuable as BPI Gold MasterCard exists not to put its cardholder at risk. It exists to provide its holder utmost convenience and protection. But to Atty. Albert B. Arcilla, a certified world traveler, this is a fact he has experienced for so long. And his solid relationship with the bank was perfectly articulated in this line he stated in conclusion, "I have always counted on BPI to keep me safe".

ADVT.

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Only from the credit cards that can
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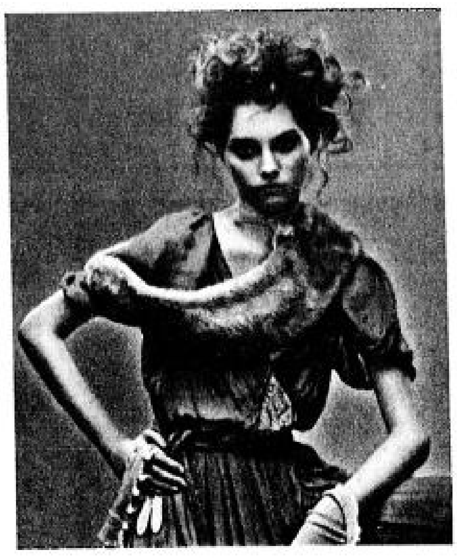
*Actual unit may vary from photo.

BPI Express Credit's Make It Happen promotion is from November 15, 2005 to May 15, 2006. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 6603, Series of 2005

WORLD FUSION
Ethnic-flavored and cosmopolitan, the style is characterized by cultural hybrids. It ties together styles from around the globe. The cuts go from short to long. They may be outrageous but structured with lots of volume-curls, with a distinct fringe section. Its colors include bright blonde, matte or extremely light tones, salt-and-pepper, black with shades of red, and black with indigo or blue as accent.



REAL DAYDREAM
The look consists of whimsical, magical, even dreamlike styles. Blossoms and trinkets are incorporated into strands of hair. Done in radiant shades, cuts go from short to long, curly, straight, or layered, with soft flowing movements. Colors include copper, cinnamon brown, chocolate brown, cashmere, hazelnut, caramel, raspberry, soft pink, lilac and sun-kissed blonde.

TECHNO NATURE
This trend is characterized by cool shades of blonde to medium brown, including pastel, pearl-like, and tone-on-tone elemental shades like sky blue, ocean blue and moss green. Techno Nature consists of streamlined and geometric haircuts, but with natural lines that are soft, light and feathery. The style consists of simple wash-and-wear hairdos specifically designed for busy people.

GOTHIC LUXURY
A contrast of light and darkness, cuts can go from short to long, accented by expressive elements. High drama is brought about round, sleek, wavy and heavy one-length cuts. Colors include cool blonde, warm golden blonde and black, with dark violet or red wine shades. Dark red, plum, black and white locks are accented with pearl, diamond and silver embellishments.

Classy cuts, edgy colors

The predominant hues for Wella's Trend Vision 2006 are violets and pinks, in varying degrees of intensity

Text by Cheche V. Moral
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

A NICE HAIRCUT ALONE just doesn't cut it anymore, if British master stylist Beverly C is to be believed.

"At Essensuals, we don't see color as a separate service. Cut and color go together," said the new international creative director of the British chain of salons.

Beverly C and her creative and technical team were in Manila recently to present Wella's Trend Vision 2006. One of the most respected names in the hairstyling industry, she was twice named British Hairstylist of the Year, and twice London Hairdresser of the Year.

Beverly C was recently tapped by Toni & Guy/Essensuals founder Toni Mascolo to head the company's stylish yet "accessible" salon group Essensuals. (Toni & Guy salons are more trend-setting and revolutionary.) Essensuals has 70 salons worldwide.

The predominant colors for 2006, according to the stylist and her team, will be violets and pinks, in varying degrees of intensity.

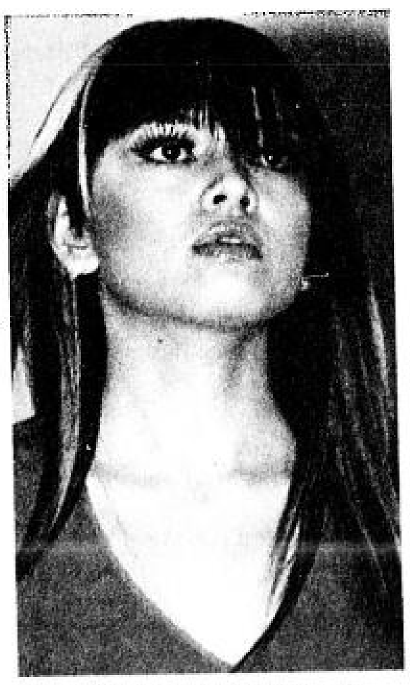
For the trend called "Techno Nature," Cherry Reyes, creative director of Essensuals Toni & Guy in the Philippines, created a curved cut that softly framed the model's face. She applied pale, almost icy-blue violet color near the tips with thin slivers of the same shade on the front.

"Techno Nature," explained Beverly C, mixes the strong look of steel structures with blunt, graphic lines and the soft, curved shapes of nature.

BEVERLY C demos the "Gothic Luxury" cut.

"REAL Daydream"

"TECHNO Nature" by Cherry Reyes



A VARIATION of "Techno Nature"

"WORLD Fusion"

The more romantic "Real Daydream" has long hair—wavy or straight—in mind. "I don't believe in [creating a cut] that doesn't work on somebody," the stylist noted. Ergo, she kept the layered length of the model's hair, but created a slight asymmetry on the front to give the cut character.

Red is the color for this romantic look. "Red is big in Europe," Beverly C noted. "It is back in a massive way." Soft to rich reds are used to create a multi-tonal feeling.

For the benefit of local stylists, the team also showed some experimental looks for editorial purposes, coiling precolored human hair into phone-wire-like cables, in the "World Fusion" trend.

"Gothic Luxury" is a throwback to the '60s, with bluntly cut sections and sharp angles, and soft fringes that veil the face. "The cut should have a focal point but still look beautiful," Beverly C stressed. Purple tones, she added, are set off by Goth-black hair. The look works best with Asian hair.

Get that gorgeous tan

KNOCKOUT!

Ria Francisco-Prieto

AS IF WE GIRLS DIDN'T have enough beauty concerns, summer adds yet another set of beauty rituals and musts. I should know. I literally got burnt!

I was getting my usual mani-ped when I decided to throw in a threading session for my face. Unfortunately I was informed that threading was unavailable in the particular place I was in. Instead, I decided to give waxing a try.

Major boo-boo on my part. A few minutes after waxing was done, my upper lip was red and really itchy. For a few days, my friends were even calling me Hitler due to the red mustache-like streaks on my upper lip. I was scared it would be a permanent scar. Luckily Terramycin healed it.

Every summer a girl has to go through extra lengths to look good. The beach is no place for unwanted hair, so a lot of women go through hair removal procedures. Not to forget mani-ped, and getting some color.

What I went through validates the fact that it's better to be careful with the procedures you pick and to stick to what is less dangerous. From now on, I will stick to threading instead of waxing in areas where there is a choice.

Even when getting a tan, always make sure SPF is at hand.

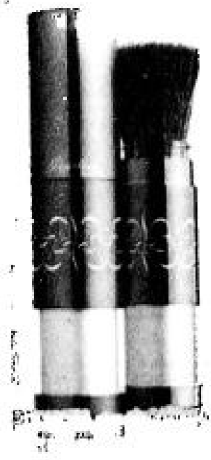
My friend gets herself spray-tanned in Emphasis and she looks really good after. Minus the sun damage!

Since getting a fake tan is pretty expensive, I was so happy to attend the recent presscon of Guerlain. After careful study of the tanning process in women with different types of complexion, Guerlain has created new classics that capture the effect of exposure to early summer sun:

Terracotta Light Sheer Bronzing Powder. This compact comes in two sets of graduated, coordinated colors with both matte and pearly effects. For the first time, all women with dark and fair complexions will be able to achieve a natural glow.

Terracotta Gloss and Shine Moisturizing Balm Sun Shimmer moisturizes the lips so that it lights up the entire face.

TERRACOTTA
Light Sheer Bronzing Powder



TERRACOTTA
Pearly Brush Sublime Shimmering Powder

Terracotta Teint Dore Moisturizing Bronzing Spray gives an instant tan, as light or as dark as you desire.

Terracotta Pearly Brush Sublime Shimmering Powder. This pearly powder, incorporated into a brush, is designed to enhance a gorgeous tan.

Terracotta Light Sheer Bronzing Powder (P2,550). Whether you're fair or dark, you'll love this sun-kissed new powder, ideal for all skin types. A perfect complement to Guerlain's legendary Moisturizing Bronzing Powder, this ingenious mosaic of five shades of compact powder, including a complexion highlighter, can be used to create and adjust a natural-looking glow.

Terracotta Gloss and Shine Moisturizing Balm Sun Shimmer (P1,298). The radiant glow of Terracotta Gloss and Shine intensifies your tan and makes it sparkle. Enriched with mango butter and cotton extract, this gloss melts deliciously, like a balm, without the sticky feeling. It leaves skin soft, supple, comfortable and moisturized.

Terracotta Pearly Brush Sublime Shimmering Powder (limited edition, P2,698). This lightweight loose powder incor-

MODELS all bronzed up by Guerlain

Post-Holy Week skincare bargain finds

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

THE HOLY WEEK IS supposed to be a time for reflection and prayer. That shouldn't cost a lot, but everyone goes out of town and we all know how that racks up quite a bill. My aim in this column is to look for great bargains and special sales after the cost-heavy Holy Week.

Have you visited Essenses lately? Those of you who love products that have an aromatherapy feel to them should definitely pass by the L'Occitane counter. It has great two-in-one packages that are buy-one, take-one or hugely discounted.

I could not believe my luck as several of my favorite items were paired up. It was not the usual crappy extra item added to the package. The package in fact combined customer favorites.

My head spun as I made a grab for a pack of spicy orange candles that wake me up on lazy days and eliminate bad odors from the kitchen or bathroom long after the candle is extinguished. I also grabbed the almond shaping gel that checks cellulite.

Desirable pair-ups are the almond shaping gel and almond candle, as well as blossom dew fragrance and shower oil. The scent is the only sweet scent that can be worn in the summertime as it smells clean and yummy at the same time. The body oil is a bestseller as it exfoliates, moisturizes, cleanses and leaves the yummiest-smelling fragrance.

Green Tea lovers would be glad to know that it has included its fragrance and candles in one package.

L'Occitane items are not cheap, but those of you who have been lusting after the products can get the chance to stretch your budget and hoard the items you love. Offer good till supplies last.

Apivita, a Greek beauty and body line, has super bath and body products that are a lot cheaper than L'Occitane's but smell just as great. It has its own buy-one, take-one packages. They may be good Mother's Day gifts.

Apivita has three main aromatherapy body lines, and I have them all! They suit women's ever-changing moods. Picking a favorite is tough for me.

The Harmony line smells fresh and clean with green tea, bergamot and sea weed. It mixes well with perspiration, making me smell eternally fresh.

The Energy line—ginger, lime and green tea—is a spicy citrus scent and seems the best seller. The Euphoria line is a milk-lover's dream with white chocolate, vanilla and white tea—a scent I associate with babies and a happy childhood.

My packages have a gentle body scrub, milk bath, body milk and shampoo all in the same scent family, so I literally smell the same from head to toe the whole day.

Soaps

For the hot summer weather, I love using soaps because they keep odor-causing body oils away longer. Not just any soap will do for me, though. I want those with skin-exfoliating and -lightening properties to ensure even skin tone all over.

I have discovered two reasonably priced soaps from the grocery. The Garden Secret Papaya soap (P35) is available in most groceries except SM. It has two variants, orange and green. What makes this different from other papaya soaps is the presence of two active ingredients found in the famed Magic Cream.

HYPE whitening lotion

The other brand that also whitens and rejuvenates is Hype duo green papaya and vitamin C soap (P59.75). It has a matching lotion at P119.75 that is non-greasy and works for me.

Most papaya soaps just exfoliate skin. Hype has skin-brightening agents and does not dry the skin. It makes your skin tone even, and the lightest you will go is baby-light.

Garden Secret Papaya and Hype are cheap enough for me to justify and pair up with my Belo body-whitening cream that costs P10,000/1 kg (VAT not included), which I use only at night.

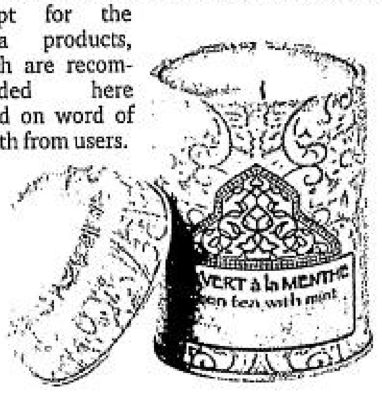
Other whitening lotions in the grocery are Godiva licorice lotion (P120) and Nivea Night Body lotion. They do not work as fast as Belo's and yield less dramatic results, but they do work and are a lot cheaper.

I suggest you apply these grocery brands morning and night after every shower. Top it off with sunblock during the day.

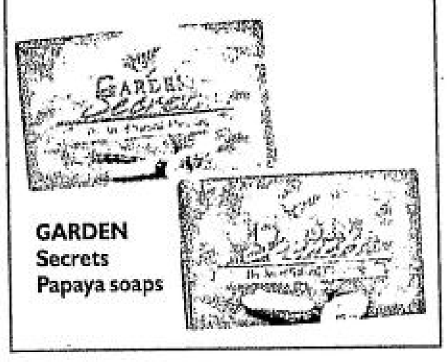
Nivea has a day-whitening lotion with SPF 30.

You may also try L'Oreal White Perfect triple whitening body lotion with SPF 18 (P850) which exfoliates, whitens and protects.

The author has tried every product above except for the Nivea products, which are recommended here based on word of mouth from users.

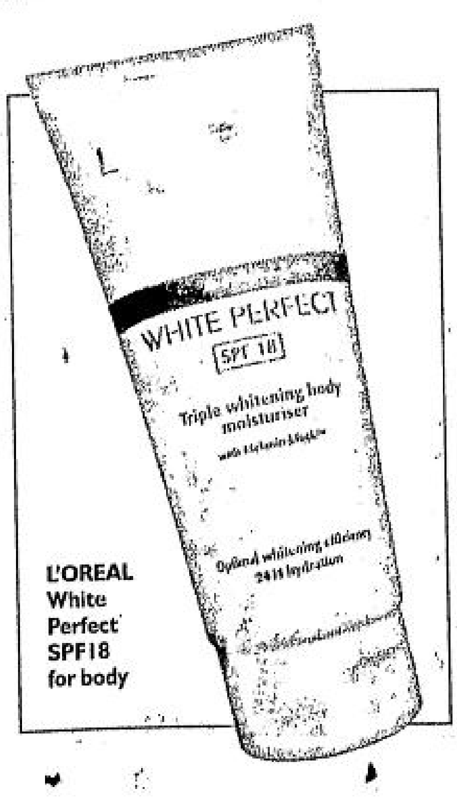


L'OCCITANE Green Tea with mint candle



GARDEN Secrets Papaya soaps

EUPHORIA body scrub



L'OREAL White Perfect SPF18 for body

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- Susano Complex, Novaliches
- Berkeley Square, Commonwealth
- Nagaland, Emall, Naga City

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0434, Series of 2006.

See flyers for details.

Get that gorgeous tan

From page D2

porated into a brush is intended to illuminate the face and body with pearly radiance. Shimmering with metallic reflections, it highlights bronzed skin for hours to make you look like a summer goddess.

Terracotta Loose Powder Kohl-Brun Dore 02 (P1,698). This enigmatic and flattering shade allows every woman to have more alluring and enticing eyes.

Terracotta Teint Dore, Moisturizing Spray for the body (P2,150). This is a gentle gel-cream which sprays effortlessly all over the body. The subtle makeup perfectly imitates the natural glow of a tan. Moisturizing, ultra-comfortable and long-lasting, it melts into the skin, spreads easily and dries instantly without staining clothing. Its caramel tone can be layered in order to suit absolutely any complexion and the results are perfectly natural.

I tried the products and I am very happy with it. To think that I am really pale. Guerlain gives me a glow that actually makes me look like I got a little sun. I suggest going to Rustan's and sampling these new summer products. You don't have to get the complete line. Just pick what suits your lifestyle. I'm sure you will fall in love with at least one!

Visit the new Guerlain counters, now open at Rustan's Shangrila Tower and Rustan's Makati.

Stay away from perfume or anything heavy-scented, because the heat will intensify the scent. Stick to a light fragrance or baby cologne.—*Mia Fausto-Cruz, Seventeen magazine EIC*

Exercise is key to good health and glowing skin. Start the day by going to the gym to do cardio and lift weights. Plus, drink lots of water.—*Patty Betita, personality development enhancer and modeling coach*

Put a lot of SPF on your face and be diligent in moisturizing. Also, look for a good eye cream and remember that it is different from your facial moisturizer.—*Chesca Garcia, actress*

I like bright popsicle-pink polish on my toes during sandal season. It goes with anything you wear!—*Ianne Sison, Cosmopolitan magazine EIC*

Dry hair is unattractive. Keep a leave-on-conditioner in your bag to nourish hair when needed.—*Kelly Misa, model*

A pair of shades or a cap is a good way of protecting yourself from the heat while looking pretty fashionable.—*Joanne Tengco, businesswoman*

To stay fit and trim during bikini season, find ways to exercise no matter how busy you are. Walk your dog around the block or take the stairs instead of the elevator.—*Peaches Aberin, courtside reporter*

Summer is the time I get active and join as many badminton tournaments as I can. The workout keeps me stress-free and well-balanced. Aside from keeping ourselves well hydrated, it's also best to maintain a good disposition.—*Gem Padilla, thespian*

Oishi
Recipe to chill:
Sundays
+ water + ice!

SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE: ONLY ₱7.50 PER LITRO PACK
Enriched with Vitamins & Minerals
100% RDA of Vitamin C

About ₱3.60 per popsicle!

SUNDAYS JELLY MANGO POPSICLES

INGREDIENTS:
1 litro pack of *Sundays Mango*
1/2 cup boiling water
1 (3 oz.) pkg. unflavored gelatin
1/2 cup cold water

PROCEDURE:
Dissolve unflavored gelatin, *Sundays Mango* in the boiling water. Add the cold water and stir well. Pour into popsicle molds or ice cube trays. Freeze partially, add sticks and freeze until firm, about 2 to 3 hours. Makes about 1 dozen.

For more great ways to chill this summer look for the **Oishi Sundays + Suntea Trial Pack** in leading supermarkets.
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Oishi Sun TeA
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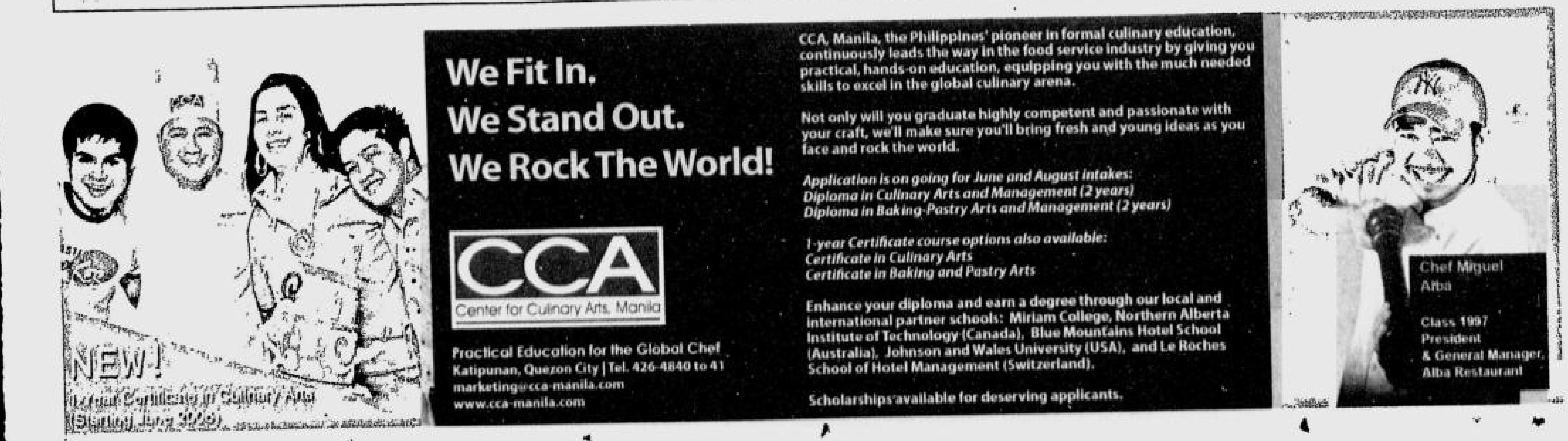
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The lightness of wearing

PHOTOGRAPHY: KUBLAI MILLAN

WEAR SOMETHING EASY, something light and something white that "breathes" this season as you temporarily leave the urban jungle and head for clear blue waters, velvety white sands and light ocean breeze.

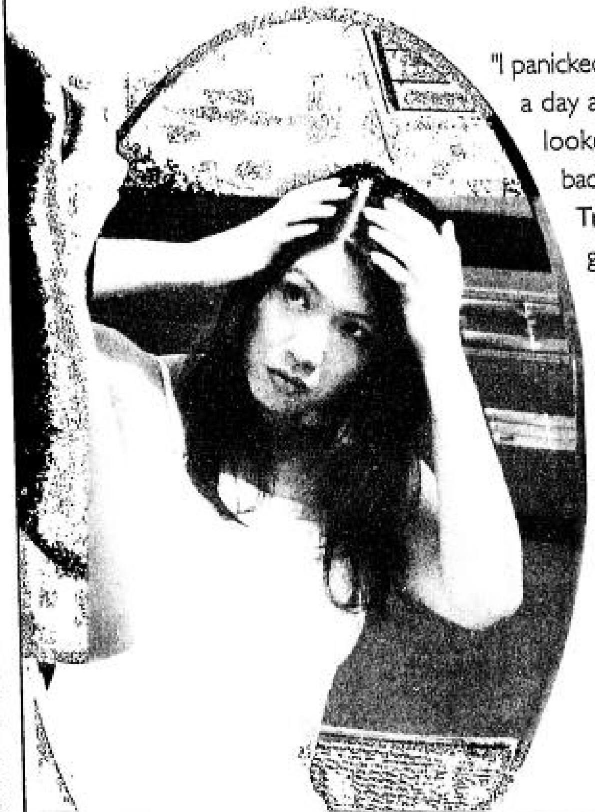
In her latest collection of banana wraps, Dita Sandico-Ong gives the pieces a new shape that is organic, chic and ultra-modern. The fabric's ability to breathe, a quality for which it is known, is retained.

The "*lukot*" wrap comes in pearl, cream and ecru and is accented with pale silver and gold threads that add subtle sheen to the weave.

An ideal summer accessory, it can go casual as beach cover-up for a bikini, or formal, draped over an Irish linen gown. Creating the desired effect of easy elegance is effortless.

The designer's latest collection may be viewed at her shop at 35 Wilson St., Greenhills, and at Rustan's Makati and Rustan's Shangri-La Tower. Call 7267260 or 7265102.

LIMP, THINNING HAIR:
Save Your Hair at Svenson!



"I panicked when I began losing more than 100 strands a day after my hair started to go limp and thin. It looked so dull and didn't seem to be growing back. After taking Svenson's **Ultra-Lush Volumizer Treatment**, my hair was growing again in no time, and looks lusher and is thicker to touch!"

Clarizza King, *Model*

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SOME of the 2,000 delegates who attended the acquaintance cocktail party at the sprawling garden of Barcelona's Rey Juan Carlos Hotel

Enjoying the skin trade in Barcelona

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** using **Kodak** EasyShare system

FASTER THAN YOU could bat an eyelash, I accepted the invitation of Rustan's Essenses to Barcelona for a meeting with Dermalogica's hotshot founder and top skincare therapists.

Apres a smooth, absolutely enjoyable flight on KLM's state-of-the-art aircraft, the Boeing 777, and a two-hour stop at Amsterdam's fab Schipol airport, we arrived at one of my favorite cities in Spain, bustling Barcelona.

Ahhh, the awesome La Sagrada Familia by Gaudi, the Casa Mila, the famous La Boqueria market... all this, plus more, are synonymous to the captivating, exciting city of Barcelona, *palanggas*. It is where the renowned Dermalogica hosted the large gathering of more than, take note, 2,000 skincare therapists from 40 countries.

The Philippine group was represented by the Dermalogica rah-rah team of Rustan's Commercial Corp., headed by brilliant **Rhoda Campos**, the hotshot VP for cosmetic and toiletries; **Riza Torres**, AVP for B2B-Distribution; **Carmela Vedar**, business development manager for Dermalogica; model **Rissa Mananquil Samson**, who made heads turn wherever she went, dahlings; and yours truly, *natch*!

The congress kicked off with a fantastic welcome cocktail reception at the Rey Juan Carlos Hotel's cool sprawling garden, where Dermalogica representatives from key cities of the world rubbed shoulders.

The next morning, bright and not so early (thank goodness), we were all whisked off to the Palau De Congresso de Catalunya, where **Jane Wurwand**, the brilliant founder of Dermalogica and the International Dermal Institute, spearheaded the list of super guest speakers and discussed "what today's women and men want."

The different sessions tackled common anxieties of female and male customers—with the most popular concern being their passion for results (money is not a question).

Super-interesting topics included the latest medical trends, the emerging male market, and identifying new clients by observing their behavior.

There were inspirational talks on the world as a "touch-starved" society, and how the skincare industry can "uplift lives through emotional and physical healing."

After two hours of lectures, it was break time for tea and cookies. During this recess, we mingled with different delegates from many countries. And the non-speaking English delegates were so impressed that the Filipino gang could speak perfect English. **Rhoda C.** and I conversed with some of the Spanish-speaking delegates from South America.

Anyway, *apres* more interesting lectures from well-known personalities and a fab dinner, I was all ears to the lecture of the International Spa Association, which identified three main client profiles. Okay, here it goes:

First is the gateway (or entry level)—they are the clients who form the bulk of the population. They are new to professional skincare and are not very skin-savvy. They usually only receive manicures, pedicures or massages. So, they walk into the salon and they want treatments that affect appearance; they want to feel special, pampered and beautiful.

Then comes the mid-level (or escape) clients, who ask, "What will this do for me?" This is the most neglected group. They understand the importance of professional skincare but still visit a skincare center only four to six times a year.

Next comes the mid-level clients, who already understand the basics, so good skin therapists, like those found at any Dermalogica salon, must always "expand their clients' regimens by recommending more advanced products."

And last, there are the "hard-core clients." They are interested in the body as well as in the face. They are not at all price-sensitive. They are spa connoisseurs, visiting three to four times a year for well-being. They are the smallest segment of the market, the hardest to please, and the highest per-capita spending on professional products and services.

Another *tres* interesting topic was about the new spirit of beauty and the comfort craze. "Consumers are craving a retreat from aggression, looking for escape and ways to comfort themselves," said **Rita Silvan** of Elle Canada.

And check this out, *palanggas*, many cosmetic companies are now launching products to calm down your skin. There is this wave of skincare products that will not only make your skin feel calm superficially, but, would you believe, also deliver Prozac-like tranquilizers to the body, integrating vitamins and minerals in creams, lotions, and even skin patches, so as to deliver medicinal benefits to the skin.

The new trend is reflected in Dermalogica's latest Daily Resurfacer, which has revolutionized the industry's approach to exfoliation. Although particularly effective for the treatment of photo-damaged, acneic and maturing skin, Daily Resurfacer is suitable for all skin conditions and is designed for clients wishing to have smoother, healthier-looking skin, *palanggas*.

"The humanist consumer is the consumer of the future. She or he is hyper knowledgeable and multifaceted. They read labels and want to know where ingredients come from," said Sullivan.

The bottom line, *palanggas*, is beauty is both for the body and the soul. Total beauty is beauty that feels good, looks good and does good. With 20 years behind it, Dermalogica proves this, *palanggas*.

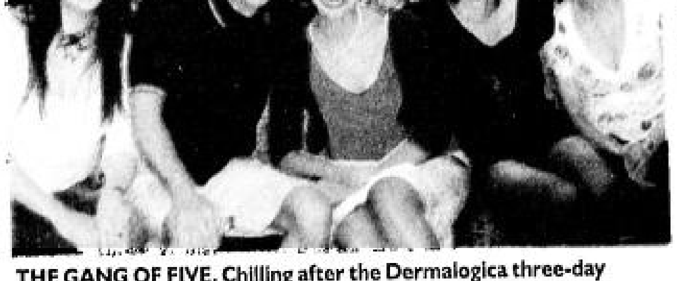
Afterwards, it was time to rock and roll at an old Medieval castle.

Hey, dahlings, make that must-do appointment at the Dermalogica center located at Essenses Aesthetics, 5/F, Rustan's Makati; Essenses in Rustan's Alabang Town Center; Urban Spa, Shangri-La Mall; Fitness First in RCBC Plaza; Serenity Spa in Cebu; and Skin Zone in Chimes Mall, Davao.

ATTRACTIVE Emma Hobson, Dermalogica's education manager for Asia, Australia and New Zealand

SHARON Williamson, education manager for Europe, Middle East and Africa, talked about healthful Indian techniques used in Dermalogica clinics around the world.

IVOR Gordon of Dermalogica

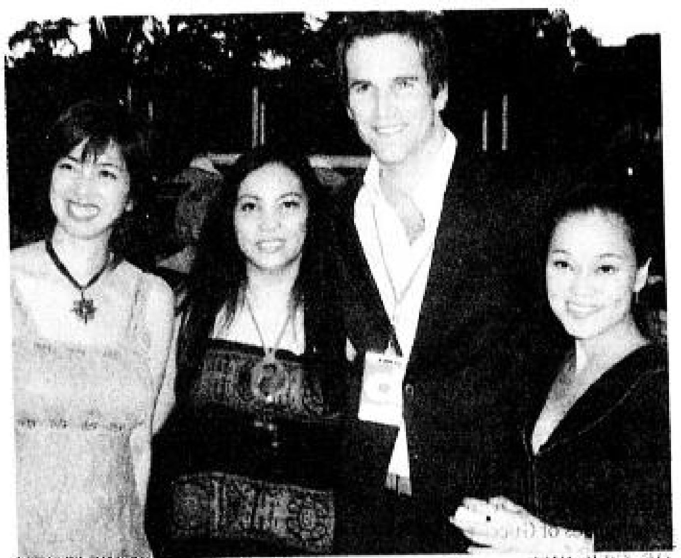


THE GANG OF FIVE. Chilling after the Dermalogica three-day conference at the fab five-star Hotel Art of Barcelona: Carmela Vedar, *moi*, Rissa Mananquil Samson, Riza Torres and Rhoda Campos

NARENDRA Mehta, developer of the famous "Champissage," demonstrates the massage technique on a delegate from South Africa.

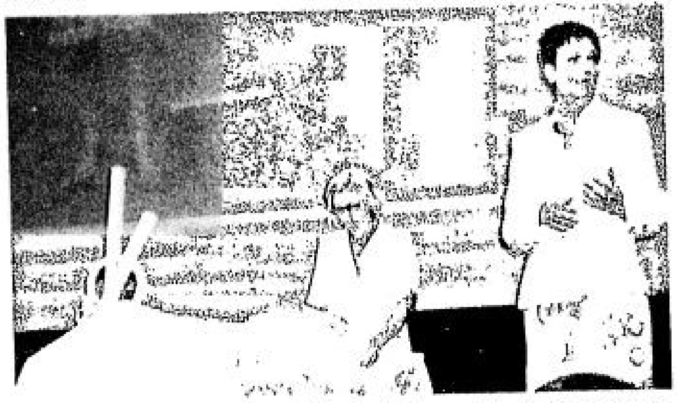
Welcome to Barcelona

OUR gang with one of the statues in famous La Rambla, Barcelona



RIZA Torres, AVP-B2B distributions, Rustans Commercial Corp.; Carmela Vedar, business development manager for Dermalogica; good-looking Stuart Leitch, marketing manager of Dermalogica International; and Rhoda Campos, vice president of RCC

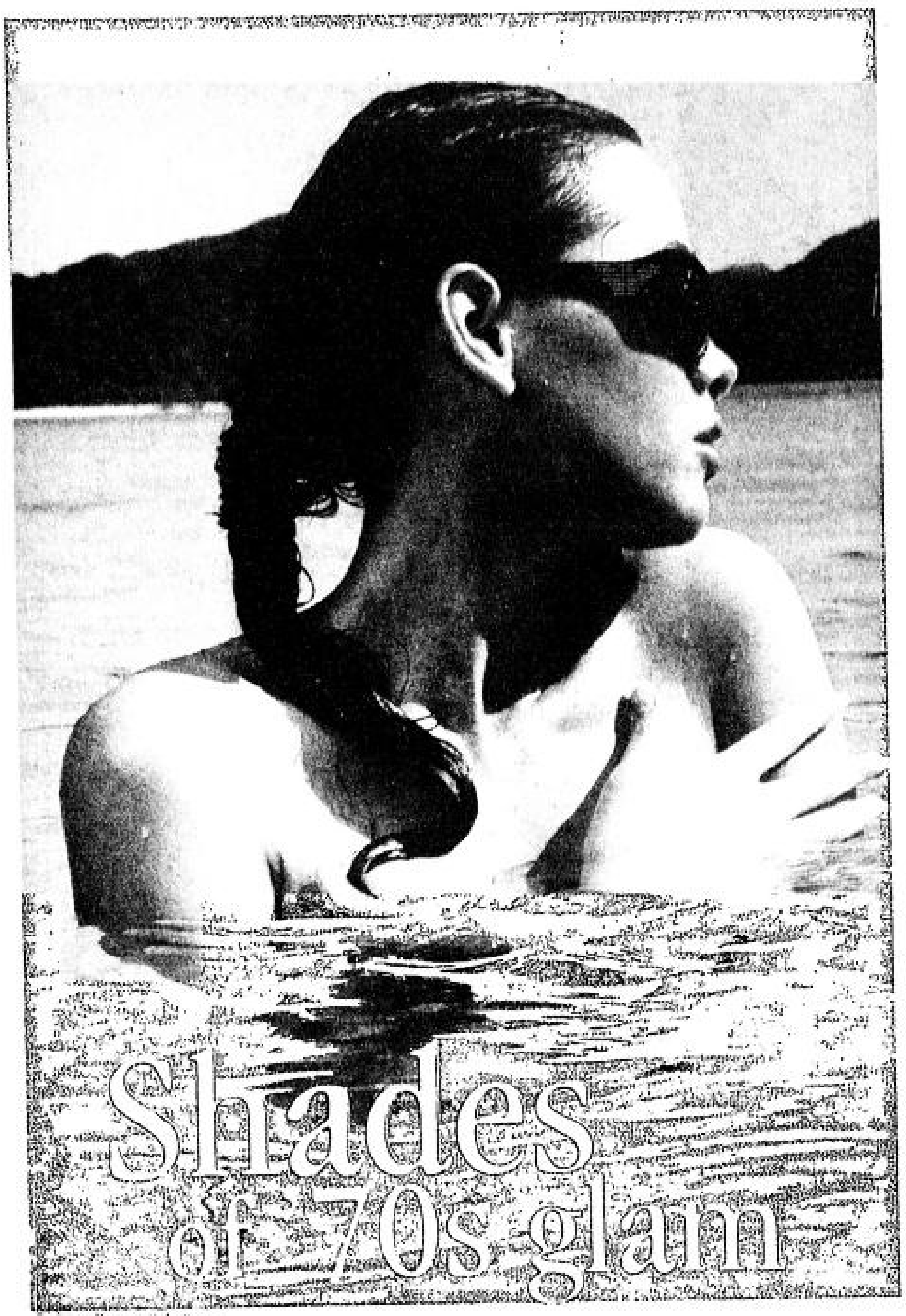
WOMEN power. Diana Howard, VP of technical development, and Jane Wurwand, founder of Dermalogica and International Dermal Institute



A MANAGER of one of Dermalogica's clinics explains the importance of touch in applying Derma's skincare products.

ONE of Dermalogica's top facial care experts explains to a Swedish delegate the right application of Derma's skincare products.

DERMALOGICA'S First Lady, Jane Wurwand, poses with some delegates from Vietnam.



Shades of '70s glam

THE LATEST EYEWEAR FROM THE ITALIAN style houses of Gucci and Armani hark back to '70s glam, from Steve McQueen to Jackie O, from stylized logos to generous dimensions.

Gucci drew inspiration from its own archives for its new designs. Take the "buckle motif," which was used in the '70s, mostly on jewelry, gifts and shoes. Now, a stylish metal buckle engraved with the Gucci logo makes a comeback on the sunglasses' temples.

This revamped buckle detail is also to be found in Gucci boutiques, making an appearance on leather goods and accessories.

Another icon from Gucci's stylish heritage is the horsebit hinge—a tribute to the company's beginnings as a manufacturer of saddles, saddlery products and luggage. Again, the horsebit icon appears on the eyewear temples, with a more glamorous version embellished with Swarovski crystals.

Another take on the horsebit is found in the textured horsebit icon, repeated endlessly on the materials used for bags and the like. This new motif is lasered on the acetate temples of sunglasses to exact precision. The horsebit texture style comes in two rich-looking models.

For pure retro, Gucci's Vintage style stages its own comeback. This comes with gold-plated highlights on the nose bridge, endpiece and hinge, complete with toric lenses in different shades and tints.

The Aviator is a trendy, masculine concept with fashionable styling in light hues and graded lenses. The ever-famous and much-copied Gucci monogram is celebrated on the Asian models of certain eyewear.

For Giorgio Armani, the heady days of Steve McQueen and Jackie O serve as inspiration. The men's collection, for example, features a modern take on the actual pair that McQueen wore. A generously proportioned aviator-style frame is spruced up with a metal plaque inscribed with "Giorgio Armani" at the temple end of the arm, and the "GA" logo on the terminals.

On the women's eyewear, the GA monogram logo is placed strategically. Plain or studded with Swarovski diamante, the pairs come in intense colors ranging from pink to brown, white to gray, silver to black.

Emporio Armani, meanwhile, offers young and dynamic shades. Again, the logo is a major part of the design. The eagle is prominent in some pairs, while the new EA logo also makes its appearance, as it does on other Emporio Armani accessories.

The classic but reinterpreted aviator design is the key look for the men, while girls can revel in almost flat rectangular metal shapes. Colors are straight from the makeup box: sky-blue frames with grey sky-blue lenses, white with smoky grey lenses, ruthenium with emerald green.

To be sure that the Gucci and Armani eyewear you are purchasing are from a legitimate source, always look for the Safilo hologram tag attached to the side of the eyewear. This tag is an assurance that the eyewear you have purchased is made by Safilo Group of Italy, the official manufacturer.

Gucci, Emporio Armani and Giorgio Armani Eyewear are distributed exclusively by Newtrends International Corp, and are available in leading optical shops and stores.

RETRO IN THE SUN. Gucci's vintage-inspired shades with gold-plated highlights on the nose bridge, endpiece and hinge.

THE EAGLE has landed—on the temples of these shades from Emporio Armani.

Dog's Bestfriend

OUR DOG TEA TREE OIL SHAMPOO
OUR DOG EXTRA MOISTURE CONDITIONER 500 mL SOAP FREE
OUR DOG ALOE VERA SHAMPOO 500 mL SOAP FREE
OUR DOG COLOGNE SHAMPOO

EXTRA MOISTURE CONDITIONER restores healthy moisture to stresses and exhausted hair. Wrestle with toughest mats, tangles and static problems for better coat.

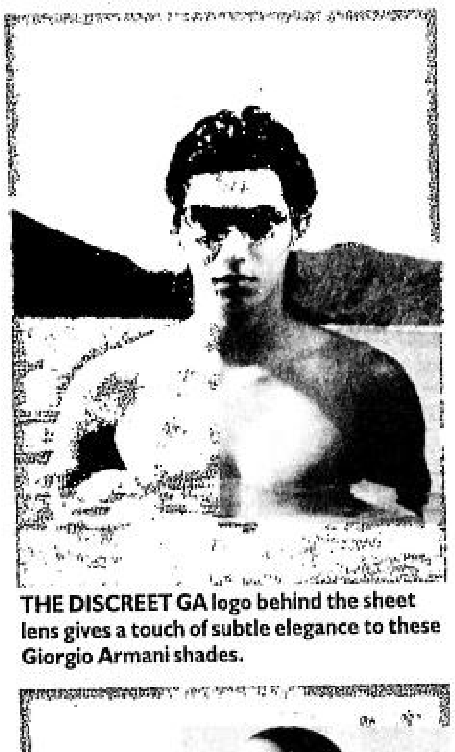
ALOE VERA SHAMPOO helps reduce tangles and repairs damaged coats while promoting healthy hair growth and natural shine

COLOGNE SHAMPOO with tea tree oil [illegible] to make your dogs' hair healthy and smelling fresh with citrusy scent. Tea tree oil cleanses and disinfects.

Soap Free
Contains no soap.
All-natural ingredients

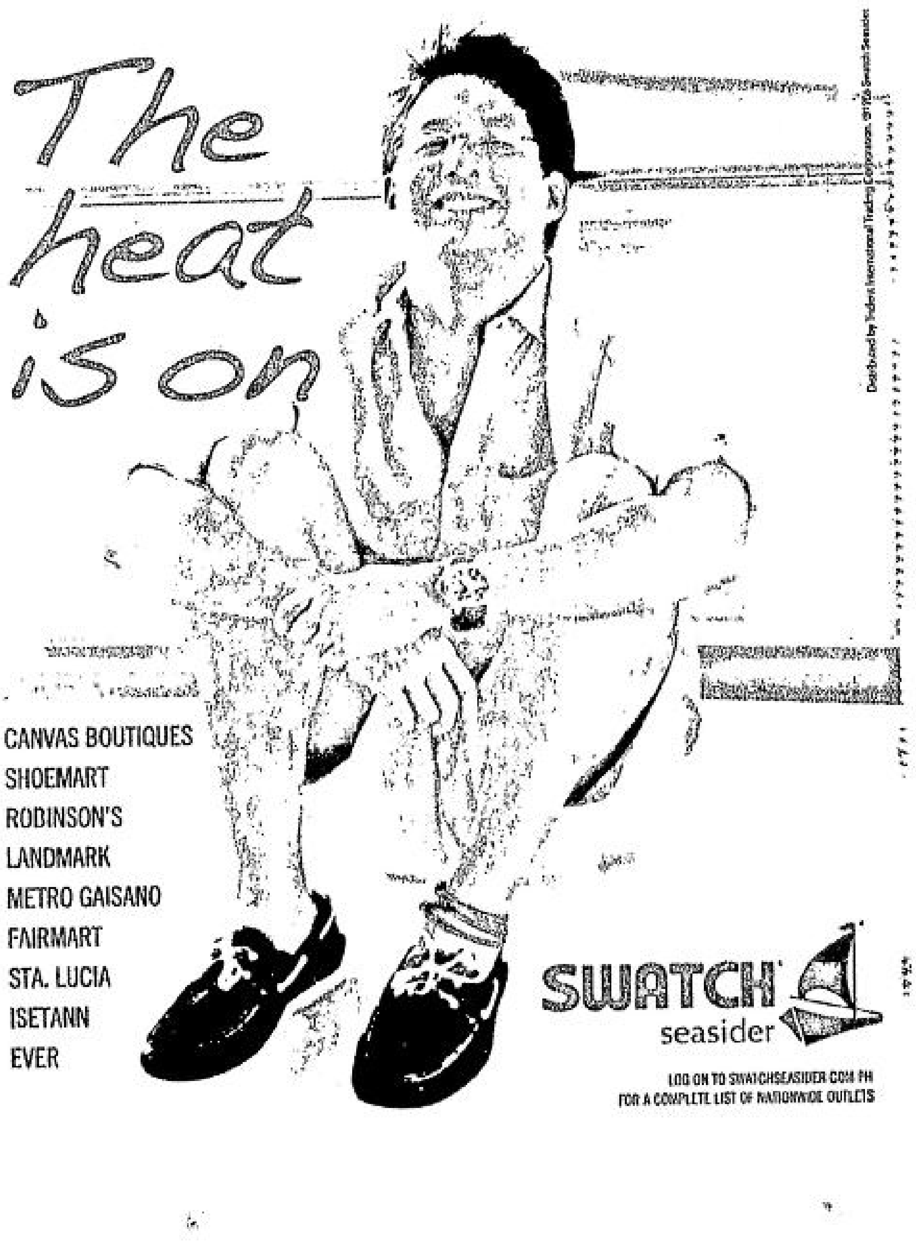
Exclusively distributed by:
Gilbert Emerson
MARKETING CORPORATION
San Juan, Metro Manila Philippines

SUPERMARKETS: Anson's Supermarket • Antipolo Super Palengke • Baguio Holiday Supermarket • Benguet Supermarket • Cash & Carry Supermarket • Cherry Foodarama • Citimart Inc. • CVC Supermarket • Fernando's Supermarket • Gaisano City Mall • Gaisano Gen San • Freeport Exchange Subic • Makati Supermarket • Park N' Shop Davao • Robinsons Supermarket • Rustans Supermarket • Shoppers Mart • South Supermarket • Sucat Foodmart • SM Super Market • Super SM Hypermart • Landmark Supermarket • Tropical Hut Foodmart • TSS Supermarket • Unimart • Welcome Supermarket PET SHOPS: Animal House • Baguio Pet Habitat • Bow Wow Pet Foods • Broadway Vet Service • Canine Depot • Dog City • Doggie Bites • Evolution Pet Shop • Green Legs • Leago's Pet World • Sea & Land Pet Shop • JM & MJ Petshop • Pet Matters • Petzone • Take & Care Dog Shop-Davao • Tin's Pet Place • This Way Pet Shop • Zoological Land Petshop HARDWARES: Ace Hardware • Handyman Do It Best Home Center • Handyman Do It Center • SM Hardware Workshop • The DIY Shop • True Value Hardware DEALER: Miles & Levels Phils Inc.



THE DISCREET GA logo behind the sheet lens gives a touch of subtle elegance to these Giorgio Armani shades.

WELL-ROUNDED: Jackie O-style oversized round lenses from Giorgio Armani and the EA round logo on the temples from Emporio Armani


The heat is on

CANVAS BOUTIQUES
SHOEMART
ROBINSON'S
LANDMARK
METRO GAISANO
FAIRMART
STA. LUCIA
ISETANN
EVER

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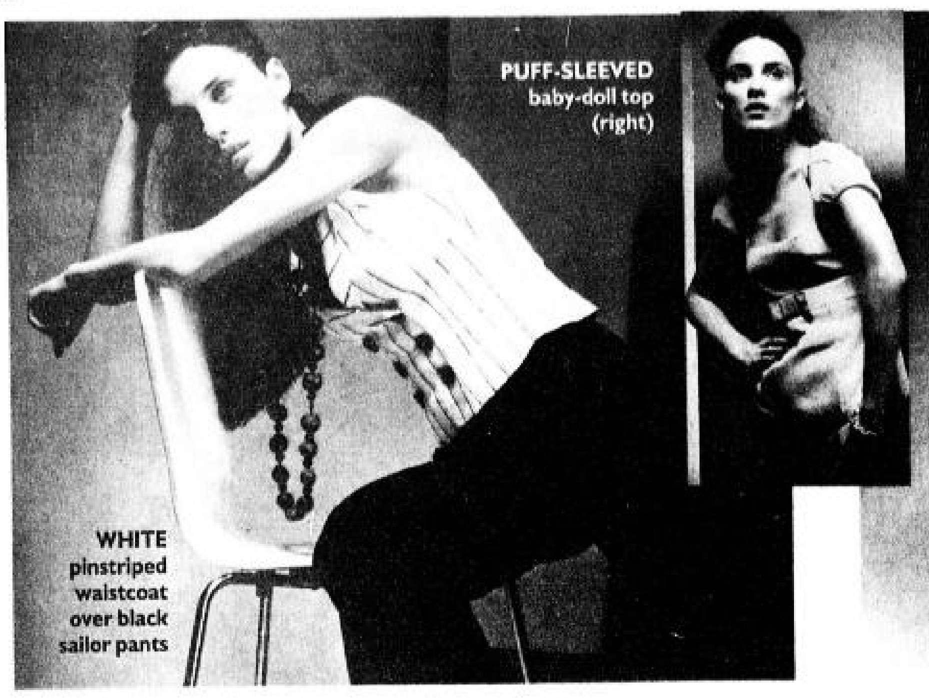


PUFF-SLEEVED baby-doll top (right)

WHITE pinstriped waistcoat over black sailor pants

CORAL short jacket with coral tweed pencil skirt and black skinny belt

Collection that's both classic and contemporary

WHITE eyelet shirtdress over maxi skirt with leather plait waistbelt

WALLIS' SPRING-SUMMER COLLECTION 2006 features classic and contemporary styles using stripes and polka dots and some Latin influences.

The collection is characterized by vibrant colors and interesting textures and embellishments. Inspired by stylish Deauville in France, top picks are cropped trousers with big buttons and navy culottes paired with a striped sweater for daytime wear and polka-dot chiffon blouse or fitted striped waistcoat for evening.

The Carnival collection, influenced by 1920s Buenos Aires, include dressy summer pieces like skirts, dresses and blouses with ruffles. Broidery is a flirty Cornelli dress with a Hessian woven belt or dramatic jewelry. Black is enhanced with strong tones of emerald, berry, white and vermilion. A slender fit is achieved by cutting close to the body.

Summer Couture's key pieces hark back to the 1960s with chiffon blouses with balloon sleeves paired with pencil skirts, figure-hugging tulip skirt with ribbon bow belt or shell top.

Fabrics are in shades of silver, charcoal white, mustard and mocha. Pleated chiffon dress, crushed satin origami dress and organdy two-piece are some of the pieces in the collection.

Accessories include metallic beaded purses, leather sash belts and embroidered evening bags. Wallis carries everything from beaded belts to camisoles to achieve whatever look you may want.

CREAM eyelet blouse over pencil skirt with plait waistbelt

A selection of this collection will also be available in petite sizes for women 5'3" and under.

Robinsons Specialty Stores Inc. (RSSI) is the exclusive franchisee in the Philippines of Wallis, the biggest women's fashion brand currently under the Arcadia Group Plc, the largest clothing retailer in the United Kingdom.

Wallis is at 3/F, Indulgences Wing, Shangri-La Plaza Mall. Visit www.wallis-fashion.co.uk

RED-AND-WHITE spotted dress

Summer stunners

WELCOME SUMMER with Dorothy Perkins' 2006 collection in a variety of styles—from '40s and '50s chic to fashion staples like stripes and polka dots.

Fresh and nautical-inspired casual wear come by way of striped swimwear, dresses and tops as well as pieces in blue, red and white.

For a more feminine look, the collection offers milkmaid blouses and petticoat dresses in soft cotton, crinkle fabrics and faded florals, with broderie anglaise, lace, cutwork and pearl buttons.

Dorothy Perkins also presents a return to 1940s fashion. Utilitarian military shapes are updated with Oriental styling. For that comfy-summery look, tea dresses are flattering in pretty patterns. Roll-hem cargo shorts, perfectly matched with floral printed blouses and platform heels are ideal combinations for a unique twist on G.I. chic.

There are also '50s-style fitted dresses and cropped jackets with bold flashes of ruby, emerald and navy in accessories and prints. Polka dots and fine stripes are seen on chiffon capped-sleeve blouses, fine knit cardigans and on full-skirt dresses with flirty frill helms.

Dorothy Perkins, which has 570 stores in Great Britain and 45 outlets worldwide, is distributed in the Philippines through a partnership between Robinsons Specialty Stores Inc. (RSSI) and Arcadia Group of the United Kingdom. Stores are in Robinsons Galleria, Power Plant Mall and The Podium.

GI hat, black satin tie, black chiffon blouse and cream pencil skirt

BLACK fitted dress and green bow bag

CREAM peasant top and denim shorts

WHITE cropped jacket, navy-and-lime striped vest and navy striped slouch trousers

Sleek, confident shades

PACIFIC Blue Shades with fancy markings on the temple

A DIFFERENT JUDY ANNE SANTOS IS shown in the latest advertising materials of Pacific Blue Shades. You will see a more inspired, confident and sophisticated Judy Anne Santos. And why not, when the photographs were taken by Ryan Agoncillo himself, her fiancé?

The 2006 collection offers models in large and close-fitting masks with a prevalence of dark tones such as gloss black and dark brown. Retro-style aviators in metals with big sizes, as well as basic styles such as the rimless and semi-rimless in normal sizes complete the line.

Pacific Blue Shades was awarded Eyewear of the Year 2005 by the Philippine Fashion Awards. The 2006 Collection is now available in all Shoemart department stores nationwide.

SOLID-WHITE shades worn on the head is the fashion trend set by Pacific Blue. After this billboard came out on Edsa, more women were seen sporting the look.

Athletic gear for men, women and children by Fila L'arte Nello Sport

Art and color in sports fashion

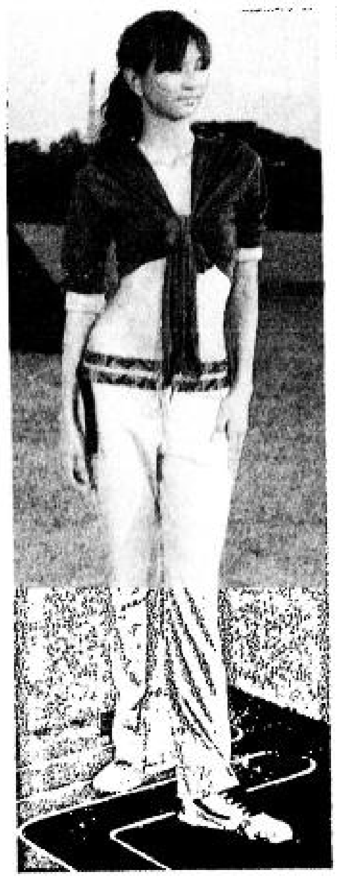
THE ITALIAN BRAND FILA PAID TRIBUTE TO the sports lifestyle during the Fila Polo Cup 2006 at the Manila Polo Club.

A fashion show featured Fila's new L'Arte Nello Sport Spring-Summer Collection. There were performances by the Asthanga Yoga and the Fila Polo Cup '06. The Polo Cup winners were recognized.

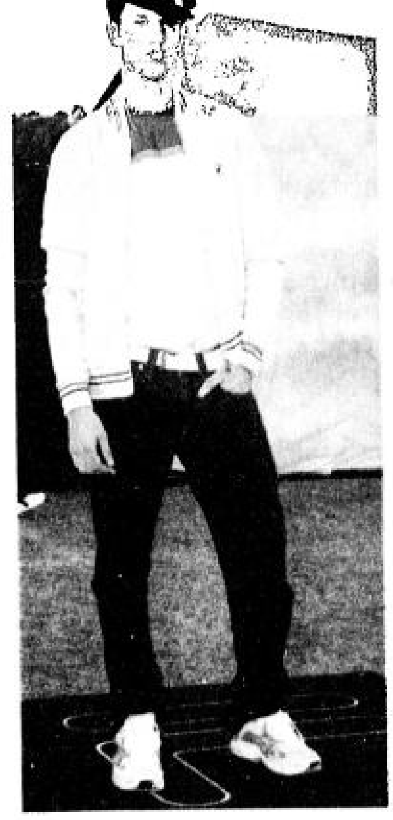
The new collection is characterized by comfortable and colorful athletic gear for golf, tennis and other sports. Its inspiration is "art in sports."

Up to April 30, Fila outlets offer the new collection and other lines at special prices and discounts.

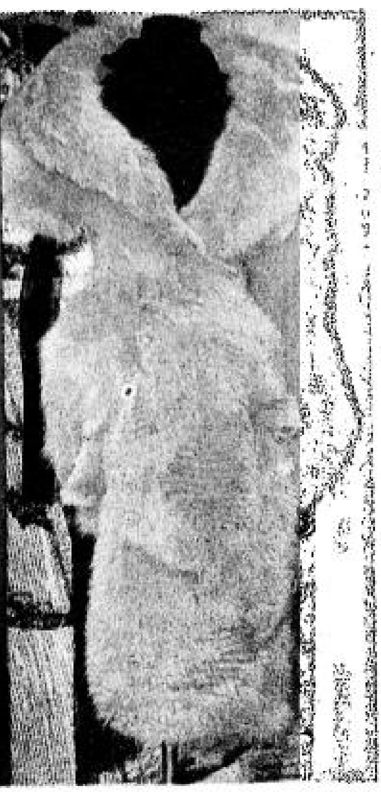
WHIMSICAL hues

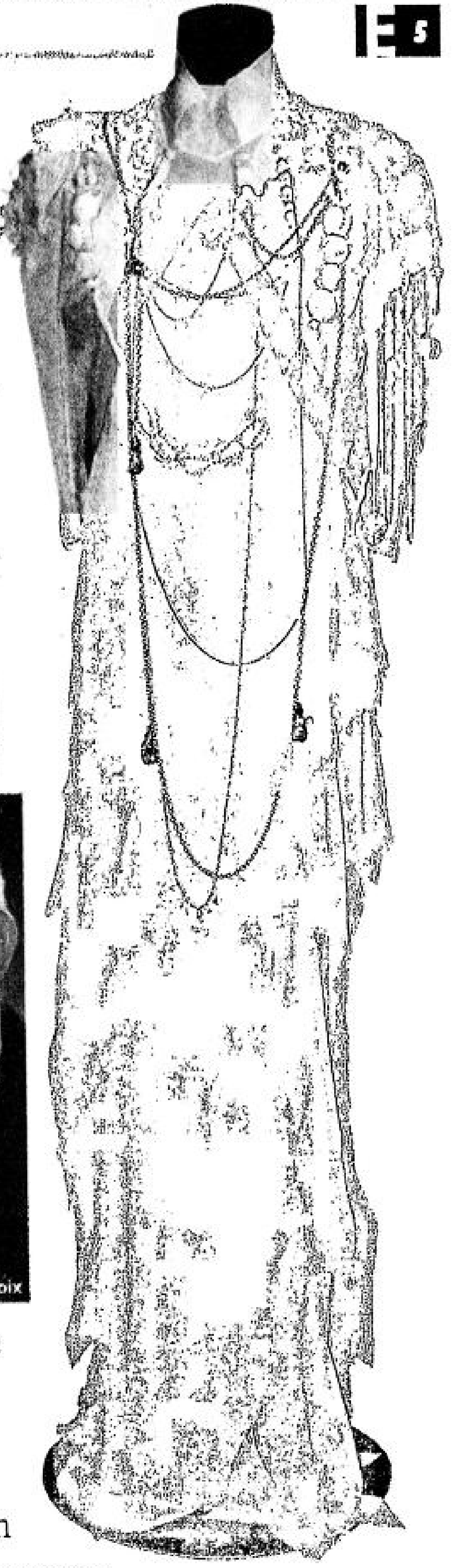


SEXY and sporty

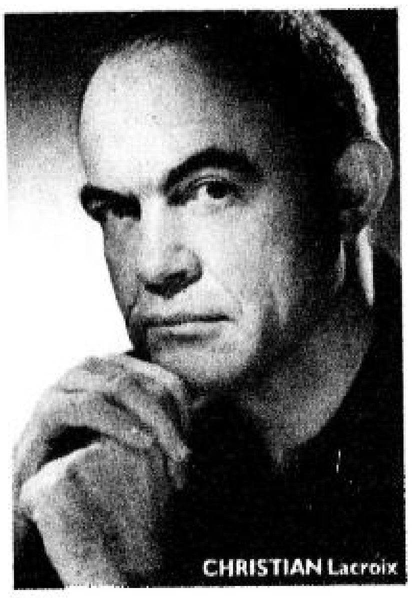


COLOR, comfort and style





Lacroix up close



CHRISTIAN Lacroix

Until May 4, couture pieces by the famed French designer are on exhibit at the Ayala Museum

Text by Cheche V. Moral
Photos by Rodel Rotoni

CHRISTIAN LACROIX MADE HIS renown with the pompous splendor of his designs, couture highly wrought with trimmings that hinted at hundreds of bleeding, calloused-finger hours and, possibly, even eyesights lost.

Until May 4, Filipinos are afforded a rare chance to witness up close Lacroix's body of work in an exhibit of 63 couture pieces from the Frenchman's private collection.

"Christian Lacroix Dialogues!" is a joint effort of the Alliance Francaise de Manille, the French embassy, the Association Francaise d'Action Artistique and the Ayala Museum, as part of "French Spring in Manila 2006."

"French Spring" is primarily a showcase of contemporary French art, and is now on its eighth year in Manila.

The Lacroix exhibit covers 17 years of the designer's work, beginning from the mid-'80s when he debuted the first collection for his eponymous fashion house.

"Dialogues!" was first shown in Lacroix's native France before touring China and Thailand. Ayala Museum is the third leg of its world tour before it makes the last jaunt in Israel.

Yves Sabourin, the exhibit's curator, said the display is customized to correspond with the sensibilities and traditions of each host country, so that here, a portion bearing several gowns with striking Spanish influences was set up to look like a religious altar. Two gowns, rather surreally, are laid out on black, tomb-like platforms on opposite ends, one a red-belted sumptuous black lace confection. "Sleeping beauties," Sabourin called them. Religious articles, like crucifixes,...appear throughout some of the other garments.

Several interesting works by other artists, some from Lacroix's own collection, are also interspersed with the display, instituting the influences of the designer, an art history graduate who had worked at Hermes and Jean Patou at the start of his career and, until last year, was artistic director of the Florentine fashion house Emilio Pucci.

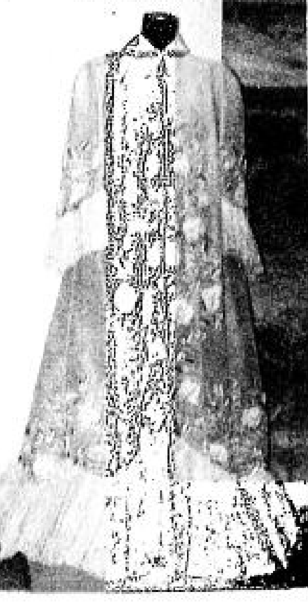
Though none of his more recent bridal designs for celebrity clients (notably pop star Christina Aguilera who wore a Lacroix to her wedding last year) are included in the exhibit, there are, in fact, several highly ornate bridal pieces, like a blue-satin-belted cloud of tulle with a matching mid-century halo-like headpiece. Another is a heavily beaded black garment. It's a bridal gown, Sabourin assured.

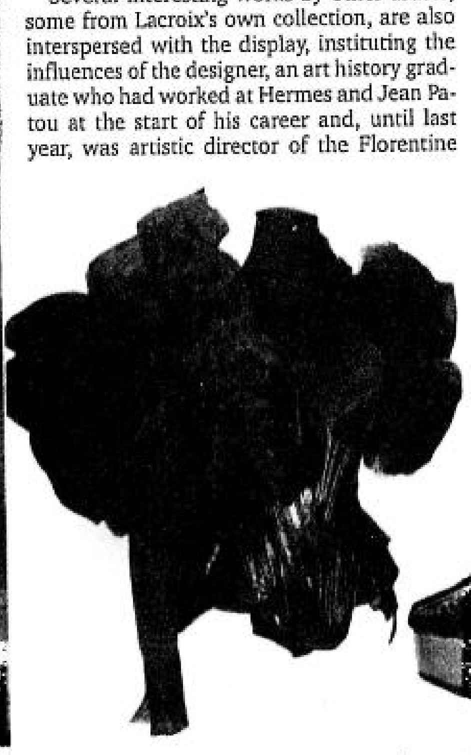
Several footwear and accessories are also on display, including some of his corsets. Madonna famously donned Lacroix's corset in her "Reinvention World Tour" in 2004.

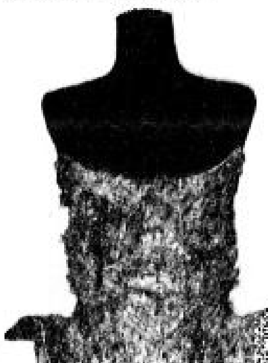
The delicate garments are strictly hands-off to museum-goers, though Sabourin said they are intentionally not glass-encased to allow a more intimate experience of the fashion artist that is Lacroix.

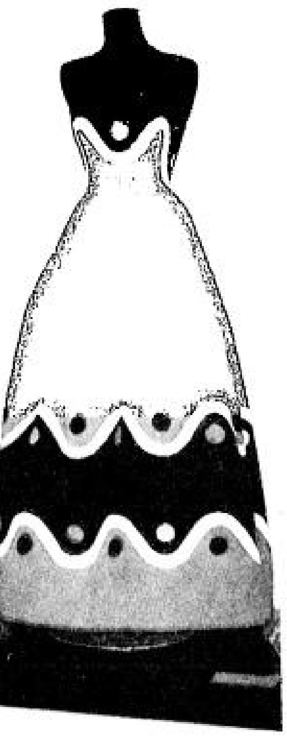
Call the Ayala Museum at 7577117 to 21 for the schedule of guided tours.

YVES Sabourin









Fab five of F.A.M.E.

MANILA F.A.M.E. INTERNATIONAL SHOWcases contemporary home furnishings, houseware, holiday décor and fashion accessories designed by five of the country's top creative minds April 19-22. Featured are Cesar Gaupo (home furnishings), Tes Pasola (holiday décor), Bea Valdes and Yvonne Quisumbing-Romulo (fashion accessories), and Carlo Tanseco for "Evolution." Organized by the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions (Citem), the export promotions agency of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the exhibits will be at the World Trade Center, Philippine Trade Training Center, East Pavilion, and the Forum and Reception Hall of Philippine International Convention Center. The public is invited 11 a.m.-4 p.m., April 22. Entrance fee is P150. No children below 12 years old. Call 8331258, fax 8323965, e-mail hardgoods@citem.com.ph or visit www.manilafame.com.

FESTIVAL. SM City Sta. Rosa, with the Laguna Provincial Tourism Office and the Sta. Rosa Tourism Office, presents the celebration of the Pandan Festival of Luisiana on April 21. The month-long festivities include Street Dancing (April 21), Pandan Fashion Show (April 25), Miss Laguna competition (talent competition-on.April 19, crowning of the new Miss Laguna on April 22), Miss Laguna Face Model Search launch (April 27), and the Sta. Rosa fiesta celebration (with street dancing and spectacular fireworks display on April 29).

FIREFLIES TOUR. The 2006 Tour of the Fireflies will be held 7 a.m. on April 23. Covering a distance of 47 kilometers, the tour will start from and end at Tiendesitas, Ortigas corner C5 in Pasig City, and will take bikers to N. Domingo, Hemady, E. Rodriguez, Welcome Rotonda, España, Lerma, Quezon Boulevard, Quiapo, Quezon Bridge, Muelle del Rio, Andres Soriano Jr., Anda Circle, Roxas Boulevard, Baywalk, Pablo Ocampo Sr., Macapagal Avenue, Edsa Extension, Osmeña Highway, Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Ayala Avenue, Paseo de Roxas, AIM, Makati Avenue, P. Burgos, Makati-Mandaluyong Bridge, Coronado, San Francisco, Maysilo, 9 de Pebrero, Shaw Boulevard, Edsa, Katipunan Avenue, Temple Drive, Greenmeadows Avenue, and C5.

BABY FAIR. Robinsons Department Store (RDS) presents "Baby Fair", offering discounts, prizes and surprises for parents and babies until April 30. Find everything your baby needs at the fair—from nursery essentials like playpens, cribs, feeding bottles, booties, mittens and high chairs to bath tubs, towels and other bathing and grooming basics.

Ramon Valera isn't the only winner

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

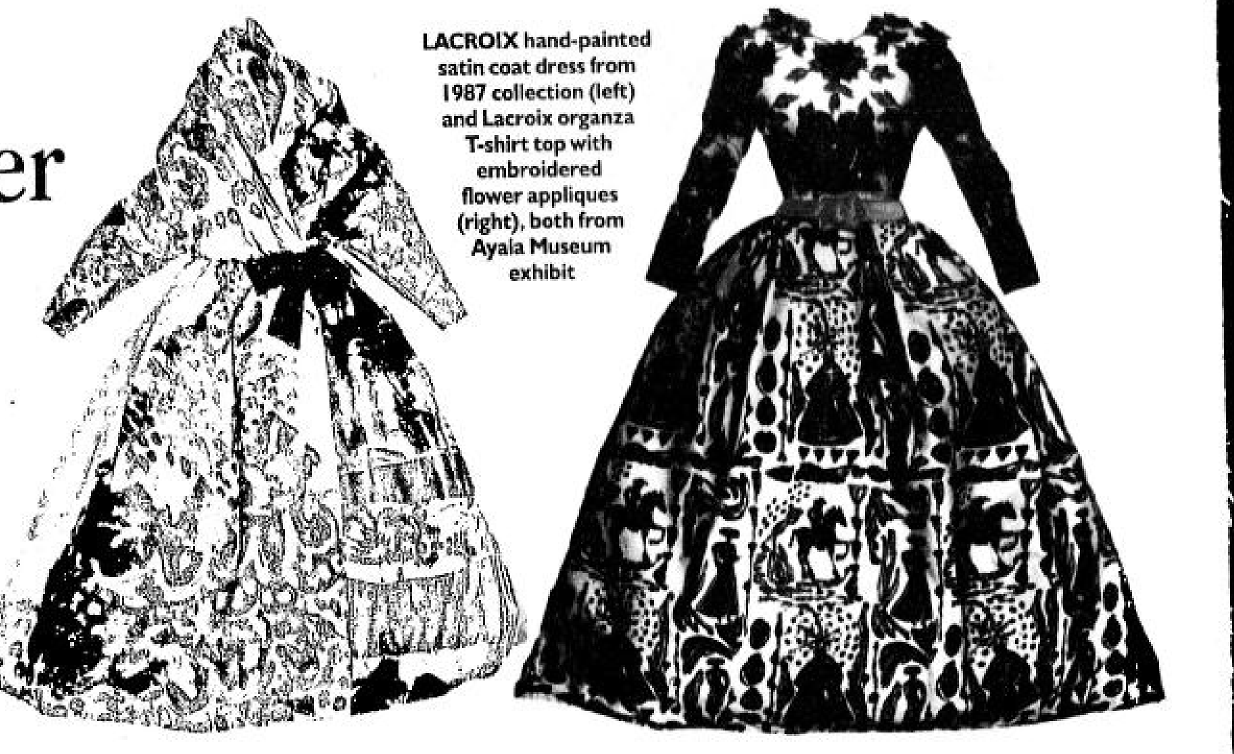
RAMON VALERA ISN'T THE only winner in the 2006 National Artists Awards. Fashion design is as much a winner, too. Fashion design has been included under architecture and design but not without first overcoming hurdles.

Primary among these is the mindset that fashion isn't art. We could imagine this was a point of debate in the deliberations leading to the selection.

Fashion design can be elevated to art transcending generations. It is a creative process—a medium through which the designer communicates to the world at large, embodying his culture, which in turn can connect to other cultures.

Consider the designer's process of creation. An inspiration, a passion—anything from his milieu or from his very existence—drives him to make up a design concept. Love of theater led **Yves Saint Laurent** toward his early sketches. **Coco Chanel** drew inspiration from the bohemian lifestyle around her—the coastal life in Deauville, her lover's horse racing. This freewheeling lifestyle drove her to junk the corset that had shackled the woman's body until then, to loosen the silhouette and the waist, dropping it to the hips. This was a turning point in women's fashion that was constricting and structured at the turn of the century.

> Fashion design overcame a big hurdle in the National Artists Awards



LACROIX hand-painted satin coat dress from 1987 collection (left) and Lacroix organza T-shirt top with embroidered flower appliques (right), both from Ayala Museum exhibit

Signposts

Fashion's creative process is neither less laborious nor less informed and inspired than that of, say, a painter or sculptor.

How does the fashion designer's work impact on society or even the world?

One doesn't have to be a scholar to note that through history, clothes or fashion have served as signposts of the historical era. For example: Christian Dior's New Look was the symbol of the post-war. Twiggy and the miniskirt are the visual icons of the '60s.

In the Philippines, there is the *terno*—from the Ramon Valera *terno* that was the hallmark of the '50s to the lavish *terno* of **Imelda Marcos** that has became the visual representation of the Filipino, for good or bad.

Fashion design doesn't only affect society. In several cases, it becomes the representation of that community, perhaps even more so than other forms of art that are not readily accessible to the population.

Thanks to a highly graphic and speedy media, fashion design has permeated our daily life, cutting across classes. Fashion is visual, and today's media is highly visual.

Fashion design is not limited to its exposure in media. It is also what feeds today's events in the malls. The malls, today's "cathedrals of culture"—like it or not—hold regular fashion shows. Why? Because it doesn't take a marketing whiz to know that fashion shows convey the message best to the masses.

In this way fashion design, even as it puts on the glitz, is not limited to the elite. It is not elitist. Because of every person's basic need to clothe himself or to look good, fashion is part and parcel of daily existence.

It is thus interesting how, through sheer passion and creativity, our designers toil to elevate fashion to art. They are not dissuaded by lack of government support, or by the refusal of scholars to recognize their work as art, or by the limited supply of materials.

Is fashion just craft?

Fashion has gone beyond function or mechanical routine. Fashion design has held the world in awe, in various periods.

Museums in Paris, New York and London have placed their haute couturiers alongside the great painters, sculptors and other masters. Yves Saint Laurent, Chanel, **Balenciaga, Christian Dior** have seen their works on exhibit in these museums—thus continuing to communicate not only to audiences the world over, but also to generations. Through their body of work, these designers have lived beyond their lifetime.

This year, the Museum of Modern Art in New York will pay homage to living British designers by devoting several period rooms of the Museum to their work in an event put together by Vogue's **Anna Wintour** and curated by its leading scholars.

On exhibit at Ayala Museum until May is "Christian Lacroix Dialogues!" featuring **Lacroix's** gowns and dresses (look for his black dress made of raffia), and accessories from his own collection, mounted with interesting artworks and art objects to denote how this genius of a designer relates his creations to their milieu.

It's the kickoff event of the French Spring in Manila, a months-long series of events held by the French Embassy, the Alliance Française and the Association Française d'Action Artistique. You don't have to be a fashion lover to find this exhibit a highly informative and interesting experience (until May 4).

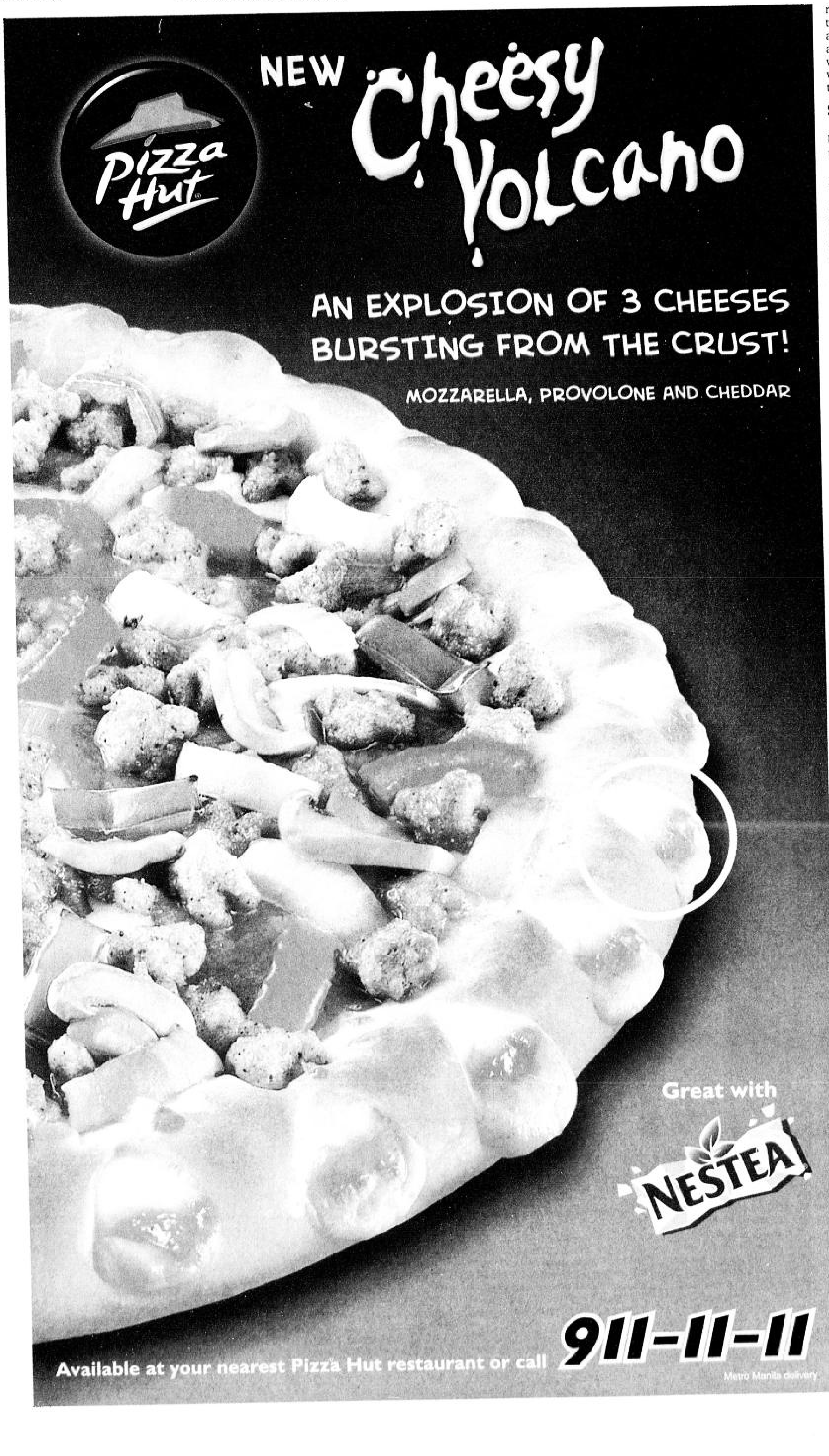
Amid this backdrop here and abroad, we like to think it's become moot to debate whether or not fashion design should be included in the National Artists Awards.

Gaupo at Citem

Over the weekend, check out Citem's annual Manila FAME International at World Trade Center and PTTC. We're looking forward to seeing **Cesar Gaupo's** designs of home accessories and furnishings—from lamps to bed.

His perspective in designing for the home? He wants pieces that become topics of conversation. He drew his inspiration from whatever captured his fancy, like Polynesian tattoos. Last night he held his Shoe Couture Launch and Fashion Show at Le Pavilion.

E-mail thelma_ssanjuan@abs.pinoycentral.com


Pizza Hut
NEW Cheesy Volcano
AN EXPLOSION OF 3 CHEESES BURSTING FROM THE CRUST!
MOZZARELLA, PROVOLONE AND CHEDDAR
Great with NESTEA
Available at your nearest Pizza Hut restaurant or call 911-11-11
Metro Manila delivery

41st Anvil
Opens New PR Horizon

41st Anvil Awards

Inquirer, Pfizer win top Anvil Awards

'Tears of Hope, Tears of Health' wins Grand Anvil

THE "TEARS OF HOPE, TEARS OF HEALTH" campaign of Pfizer's Visine Refresh and the Eye Bank Foundation of the Philippines (EBFP) has won the Anvil award in the 41st Anvil Awards of the Public Society of the Philippines (PRSP). The advocacy campaign was designed to educate the public on proper eye health and care, raise funds for EBFP operations and get more Filipinos to sign as cornea and eye donors. It has garnered the support of over 40 Filipinos celebrities who have donated their time, image and likeness to the campaign. Since the launch of the program in May, thousand of Filipinos are now card-carrying donors and actiial retrieval of cornea donations has doubled, increasing the amount of available corneal tissue for transplant twofold. Financial pledges and donations to the EBFO have also increase, allowing for more corneal transplant surgery for indigent patients. The Grand Anvil award is the third for Pfizer and its PR agency, Perceptions, Inc., in the last four years.

Photo shows (from left): Kreisten Mariano, Visine Refresh product manager , Vicente del Fierro, Jr , Anvil Awards Committee chairman; Dean Belen Tangco , Anvil Awards judge: Mio Chiongso, Blue Bottle managing director; former Senator Heherson T. Alvarez; Dr. Dominga 'Minguita' Padilla EBFP founder and president; Karen Villanueva, Pfizer Corporate Affairs director; Marietta Gocco, Anvil Awards judge; Winston Marbella, PRSP president; Robert Asprer, Pfizer Consumer Healthcare marketing director and Tina Abesarnis, Perceptions PR executives.

The 41st National Anvil Awards of the Public Relations Society of the Philippines (PRSP) held at the Manila Hotel before the Holy Week recess ushered in a new era in professional public relations and communications management that will endure the test of time and generation.

The new PRSP thrust that is closely attuned to the wave of the future for responsive and developmental communications of the 49 years old national organization of Public Relations and Communications professional, was distinctly manifested in the wide diversity of Anvil Award winning entries from various multinational and domestic Philippine corporations, foundations, educational institutions, national government instrumentalities and agencies and local government units in Metro Manila and key cities in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

In a way, the Anvil and the PRSP organization behind the prestigious recognition has effectively spread from the traditional corporate neighborhoods of Metro Manila into a national search of excellence in public relations and communications management which must adopt in cadence to the currency of the evolving times in Philippine culture and society.

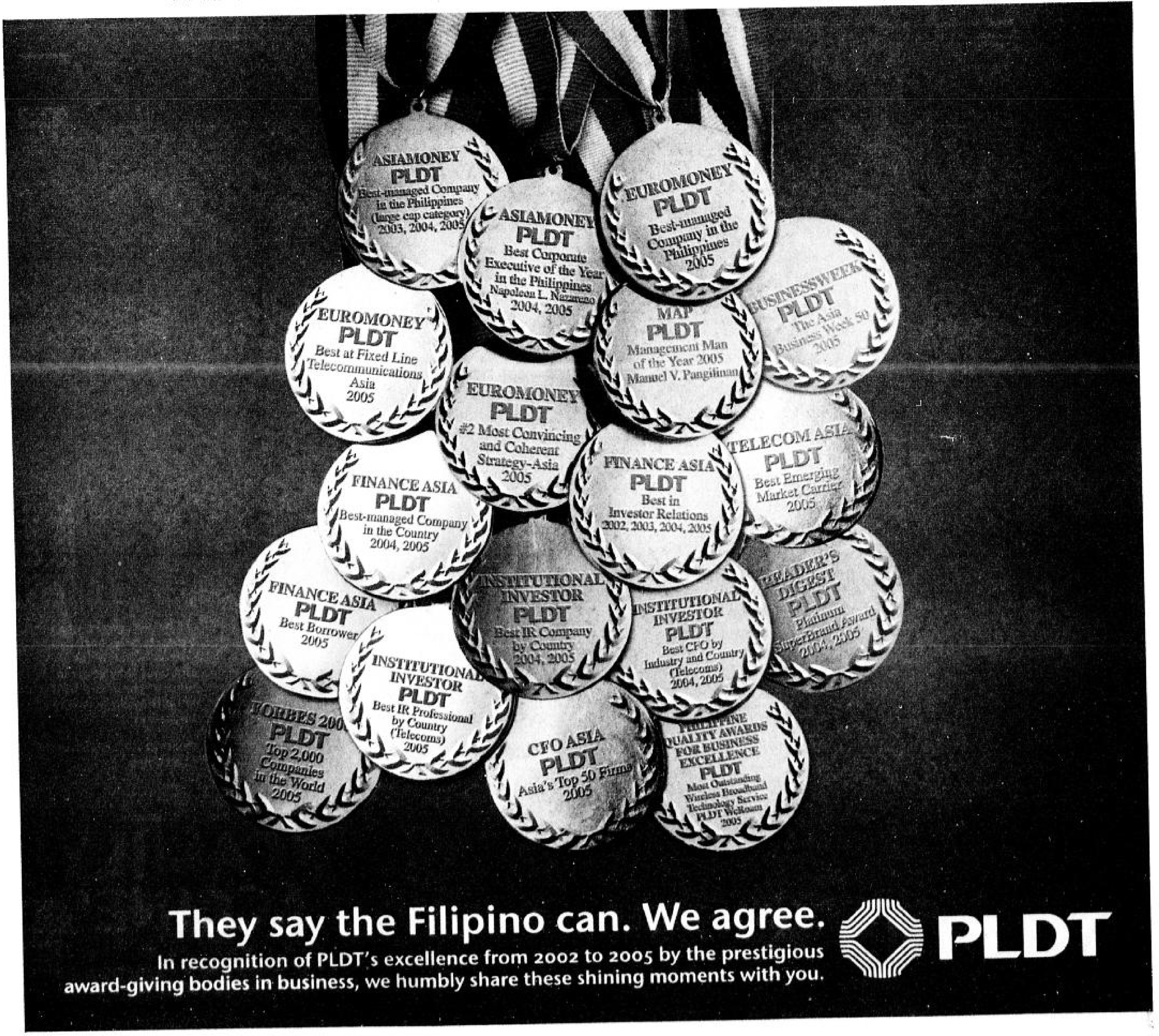
Vicente del Fierro Jr. the chairman of the 41st Anvil Award and the newly installed president of the 49 years old Public Relations Society of the Philippines said that the Anvil this year marked the departure of professional PR and communications management from the traditional dazzling glitz and gloss of programs, campaigns, events and tools supported through orchestrated manipulated media spins, and hypes from ad revenue beneficiaries who act as indispensable accessories to conjure false public acceptance.

The dawn of this new horizon synthesized in the flood of entries, would affect the charlatans and the mediocre PR pretenders in the public relations and communications profession since they must now tow the universal principles of truth and ethics, and at the same time sharpen their competence to cope with the empowered demands of the public relations industry wherein authentic and meaningful projects, programs, special events, campaigns and tools must find social niche and relevance to the interest and welfare of its diversified stakeholders for the benefit of the country.

"The era of developmental public relations and communications man-

ANVIL/ F2

The First Grand Anvil Award for Philippine Daily Inquirer. Testament to PDI's 20 Years of service.


ASIAMONEY
PLDT
Best-managed Company in the Philippines (large cap category) 2003, 2004, 2005
ASIAMONEY
PLDT
Best Corporate Executive of the Year in the Philippines Napoleon L. Nazareno 2004, 2005
EUROMONEY
PLDT
Best-managed Company in the Philippines 2005
EUROMONEY
PLDT
Best at Fixed Line Telecommunications Asia 2005
MAP
PLDT
Management Man of the Year 2005 Manuel V. Pangilinan
BUSINESSWEEK
PLDT
The Asia Business Week 50 2005
EUROMONEY
PLDT
#2 Most Convincing and Coherent Strategy-Asia 2005
TELECOM ASIA
PLDT
Best Emerging Market Carrier 2005
FINANCE ASIA
PLDT
Best-managed Company in the Country 2004, 2005
FINANCE ASIA
PLDT
Best in Investor Relations 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005
FINANCE ASIA
PLDT
Best Borrower 2005
INSTITUTIONAL INVESTOR
PLDT
Best IR Company by Country 2004, 2005
INSTITUTIONAL INVESTOR
PLDT
Best CFO by Industry and Country (Telecoms) 2004, 2005
READER'S DIGEST
PLDT
Platinum SuperBrand Award 2004, 2005
FORBES 200
PLDT
Top 2,000 Companies in the World 2005
INSTITUTIONAL INVESTOR
PLDT
Best IR Professional by Country (Telecoms) 2005
CFO ASIA
PLDT
Asia's Top 50 Firms 2005
PHILIPPINE QUALITY AWARDS FOR BUSINESS EXCELLENCE
PLDT
Most Outstanding Wireless Broadband Technology Service PLDT WeRoam 2005
They say the Filipino can. We agree.
In recognition of PLDT's excellence from 2002 to 2005 by the prestigious award-giving bodies in business, we humbly share these shining moments with you.
PLDT

Inquirer, Pfizer win top Anvil Awards

From page F1

agement has begun." Said the Anvil chairman who was also inducted as president of the PRSP in the same event.

The new PRSP president, a veteran PR practitioner and a free lance journalist since the late 60s is also a public issue lobbyist in Congress, and an internationally acknowledged consumer advocate who gained global recognition when he stood up and filed a $400 million class action in New York in behalf of Philippine consumers who were duped and victimized in a deceptive nationwide promotions by a U.S. based transnational food and beverage giant who has been relentlessly avoiding its corporate social responsibility at all costs to thousands of poor consumers for the past 14 years.

Del Fierro, along with outgoing president Winston Marbella, PRSP vice president Juan Dayang, Larry Zurita and other past and newly elected board of directors witnessed the presentation of the much coveted Anvil trophies to the winners led by the 41st Grand Anvil winner Philippine Daily Inquirer which shared the plum Grand Anvil Honors with Pfizer for its Tears of Hope and Tears of Health, an advocacy with the Eye Bank Foundation that also had the Inquirer as its media partner.

It was the first Grand Anvil Award for the Philippine Daily Inquirer which entered its InqPulse programs to PDI's different stakeholders which makes a difference, and ultimately builds a good business reputation, a good name, and enduring corporate legacy.

PDI president Sandy Prieto Romualdez personally received the Grand Anvil trophy, the first in the 20 years of the Inquirer, and introduced the InqPulse team which conceptualized and implemented the winning project.

Sharing the equal honors of the Grand Anvil was Pfizer 'Tears of Hope, an advocacy which supported the Eye-Bank Foundation headed by Dra. Menguita Padilla.

Based on the Anvil's recent history, Pfizer is a traditional harvester of Anvil Awards which serves as a reservoir of goodwill and fortification of its business reputation against all threats and criticisms even those politically motivated.

As if by coincidence, the Philippine Daily Inquirer was the media advocacy partner of Pfizer in the Visine advocacy campaign for the Eye Bank Foundation.

Sharing the Anvil honors for their various community projects tools, and programs apart from multinational and Philippine corporate firms, are multi-sectoral foundations, educational institutions, national government agencies and branches , and local government leaders headed by Governor **Victor Ortega** of the province of La Union, Mayor **Florencio Bernabe Jr.** of Paranaque City, Mayor **Evelio Leonardia** of Bacolod City and Governor **Emanuel Pinol** of Kidapawan, Cotabato and Pasay City Mayor **Peewee Trinidad.**

The complete list of winners and the synopsis of their campaigns, programs and winning Anvil tools along with photos are featured in a separate story in this supplement.

Del Fierro disclosed, that the Anvil finalists were separately and independently screened, reviewed, and adjudged with individual score tallies by a multi sectoral board of judges known for their impeccable integrity and competence in their respective field of expertise led by its Chairman former Senator and currently presidential adviser on Overseas Filipino communities Secretary **Heherson Alvarez.**

The other Anvil jurors included **Marietta Primicias -'Goco,** a lead convenor of the Coalition for Charter Change who is the only Filipino recipient of the Eleanor Roosevelt Peace Awards of the United States, **Secretary Cerge Remonde,** presidential media adviser, **Raul Alvarez,** PLDT vice president, and president of the Advertising Board, **Mitos Comahort,** a top official of Association of Acredited Advertising Agencies of the Philippines, **Dr. Belen Tangco,** Dean of the College of Arts & Letters of the University of Santo Tomas, and **Dr. Bernardo Villegas** one of the most respected economist in the Philippines, from the University of Asia and Pacific.

Golden Quotes from the 41st Anvil Awards

Like any other Filipino organization, dichotomy among leaders of any association, be it here in the Philippines and overseas, is already a deeply ingrained feature in our character as a nation.

When the 41st Anvil National Award was conducted, we had to operate within the limit of our human capacity and sought divine intervention that our efforts though admittedly insignificant will be our humble offering to glorify God through the good deeds that forms the collective Good News from the conscious authentic compassion to.serve, and share with the different stakeholders of society the task of providing examples and models for others to follow and multiply.

From the quotable quotes during the Anvil highlights, it all left us with the lasting impression that God answered our prayers, and was evidently in full control of the total Anvil proceedings from the invocation to the last final remarks that night of April 7, 2006.

"Make me a servant, humble and meek Lord, let me lift up those who are weak."

The inspiring invocation sets the tone for the Anvil Awards.

"Leaders must serve to lead. We need to raise a breed of servant leaders in the country."

Former Senator and DILG Secretary Joey Lina in his opening remarks as president of the Manila Hotel during the Anvil Awards.

"It is a great honor to have somebody epitomize the best and the brightest in corporate governance. He is at heart an environmentalist and led legislative initiatives for environmental protection.

Winston Marbella , outgoing PRSP president and ex-officio director.

"We are not known for our ability to work collectively. Even our basketball associations are still quarreling." "But we are gifted, charming brilliant people with the knowledge, competence and ability to play it well. We have a pool of creative talent that we could pluck if we have more of these Anvil awards.. It won't take long when the Anvil will push this country into great modernization."

Former Senator Heherson Alvarez, chairman of the Anvil Jurors in his keynote speech.

"Merely documenting issues and people is not enough. Going that extra mile, making a change in one and other people's lives is the broadcaster's ultimate mission."

Rey Langit, famous broadcast journalist quoting the ideals of his late son Reyster Langit whose legacy led to the Kasangga Ko ay Langit foundation which also . won an Anvil Award.

"Sight is the most important of the senses. You learn 80% through your sight. When one loses his vision, he loses all hope. Eye Bank brings hope. The Anvil award will help us help more people."

Dra. Dominga 'Menguita' Padilla, president of Eye Bank Foundation, in behalf of the Pfizer - Eye Bank project with shared top honors as Grand Anvil Awards shared with its media partner Philippine Daily Inquirer.

"Just one more traffic light and I would have lost the chance of receiving the award. The award is a testament to the 20 years of the Philippine Daily Inquirer as a newspaper worthy of the people trust. Public Relations must serve the stakeholders of the company by connecting them to the inner values and vision of an organization, and allow them to be partners to make a difference in society."

Sandy Prieto - Romualdez, president of Philippine Daily Inquirer , barely making it to the Anvil Awards because of traffic. Referred to the Grand Anvil, the first for the Inquirer for InqPulse.

"The 41st Anvil National Awards represents the good deeds of men of goodwill that forms the Good News in today's society. Let us all promote the interest and welfare of other people by doing good to our fellow men not only for this season of lent. Moreover, let us all multiply and become men for others for all season.",

Vic del Fierro Jr., chairman of the 41st Anvil and new President of the Public Relations Society of the Philippines.

Protect your family inside and out.

At home, you'd keep your family safe no matter what it takes. But once they step out, where they go and what they do -- is way beyond you.

Protect your family at all times.

Ask your doctor about

FAMILY VACCINES

YOUR POWER TO PROTECT

An initiative of gsk GlaxoSmithKline

PR Awards extend to LGUs, NGOs and Academe

THE 41ST ANNUAL ANVIL AWARDS OF the Public Relations Society of the Philippines (PRSP) is now open to local government units, non government organizations expands to include the United Nations Millennium Development Goals and those projects in line with corporate social responsibility (CSR).

Vic del Fierro Jr., chairman of the 41st Anvil Award of the PRSP, announced the move as a strategic step to make the Anvil Award, considered to be the Oscar in the professional practice of public relations, as catalyst in hastening the actualization of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals to make our world worth living.

This years Anvil chairperson has been an active participant in recent years as an NGO representative in development global meetings in recent years held in Geneva, Switzerland under the auspices of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

A veteran public relations professional, he is also considered as the Philippines counterpart of Ralph Nader, America's foremost consumer advocate who stood up against General Motors. He represented Philippine consumers in Asian and international Congress network alliance in Europe.

Del Fierro fought for thousands of poor Filipino consumers duped in a national promotions by one of the biggest food and beverage transnational corporations of the United States, and filed a $400 million class suit in New York against this US multinational goliath on the issue of consumer justice and corporate social responsibility.

He said that the Anvil Awards represents the good news in the Philippines since it is a traditional showcase of corporate involvement and triumphs of conscious organized human endeavor geared for the welfare of the community and the public at large which is the bottom line goal of public relations.

Del Fierro said, "This year, we are infusing a more substantial meaning beyond the realm of corporate marketing glitz to include consumer welfare and protection, environmental consciousness, poverty alleviation projects, child welfare, alternatives development, which may be entered by private and public corporations and non-government organizations, media entities medical establishments, medical networks and the academe, as well as local government units, particularly cities and provinces and private foundations.

Other community and public affairs projects and even marketing campaigns with social impact to its target public audience are welcomed as entries in addition to the expanded projects that are aligned with the eight United Nation Millennium goals, which are as follows:

1. Eradication of extreme poverty and hunger;
2. Deliver universal primary education;
3. Promote gender equality and empower women;
4. Reduce child mortality;
5. Improve maternal health;
6. Combat HIV/Aids, malaria and other diseases;
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

Del Fierro pointed out that there are tons of good news stories quietly underwritten by NGOs, civic and trade associations, schools and universities, media organizations, private foundations, local government units (cities and provinces) as well as private and government corporations enough to drown out the avalanche of negative news in the national media daily.

The national recognition of this noble projects and corporate involvements through the Anvil Awards of the PRSP should inspire others to emulate and compete for excellence in unselfish sharing its resources, expertise, and talents for the welfare of the public.

In pursuit of this socially relevant horizon for the Anvil Awards, Del Fierro expressed optimism that the Anvil will serve as a medium for cross-pollination of human triumphs embodied as good news essentially anchored for the public good and welfare as manifested the wider range of participants from various stakeholders of society today.

He added that the bottom-line of public relations is the upliftment and welfare of people, for without it, public relations activities become a callous self-serving exercise for companies to award themselves annually and feel good through positive corporate publicity.

In pursuit of this socially relevant new horizon for the Anvil Awards, Del Fierro expressed optimism that the Anvil will serve as a medium for cross-pollination of human triumphs embodied as good news essentially anchored for the public good and welfare as manifested the wider range of participants from various stakeholders of society today.

"In doing so, we cultivate and nurture a national culture of concern and compassion in uplifting the plight of the poor, powerless and the marginalized members of society." Del Fierro underscored.

This year's 41st Anvil Award is also presented in cooperation with the Coalition for Consumer Protection & Welfare, Inc., Publishers Associations of the Philippines and Center for Policy Research and Strategic Studies.

Entries to the expanded Anvil Awards were sent to the chairman, Vic del Fierro, Jr. at 104 Gaiety St. Annex 1618 Better Living Subdivision. Tel nos. 821-6417 / 824-3571 / 824-5802.

Pfizer Continues Tradition of Leadership, Excellence and Community Service

We at Pfizer dedicate ourselves to helping people by discovering, developing and providing safe and effective healthcare products that help people lead healthier, longer and happier lives. We are committed to continue investing in research and development in order to find new and better medicines that save lives, prevent diseases, address unmet medical needs and improve the quality of life of Filipinos.

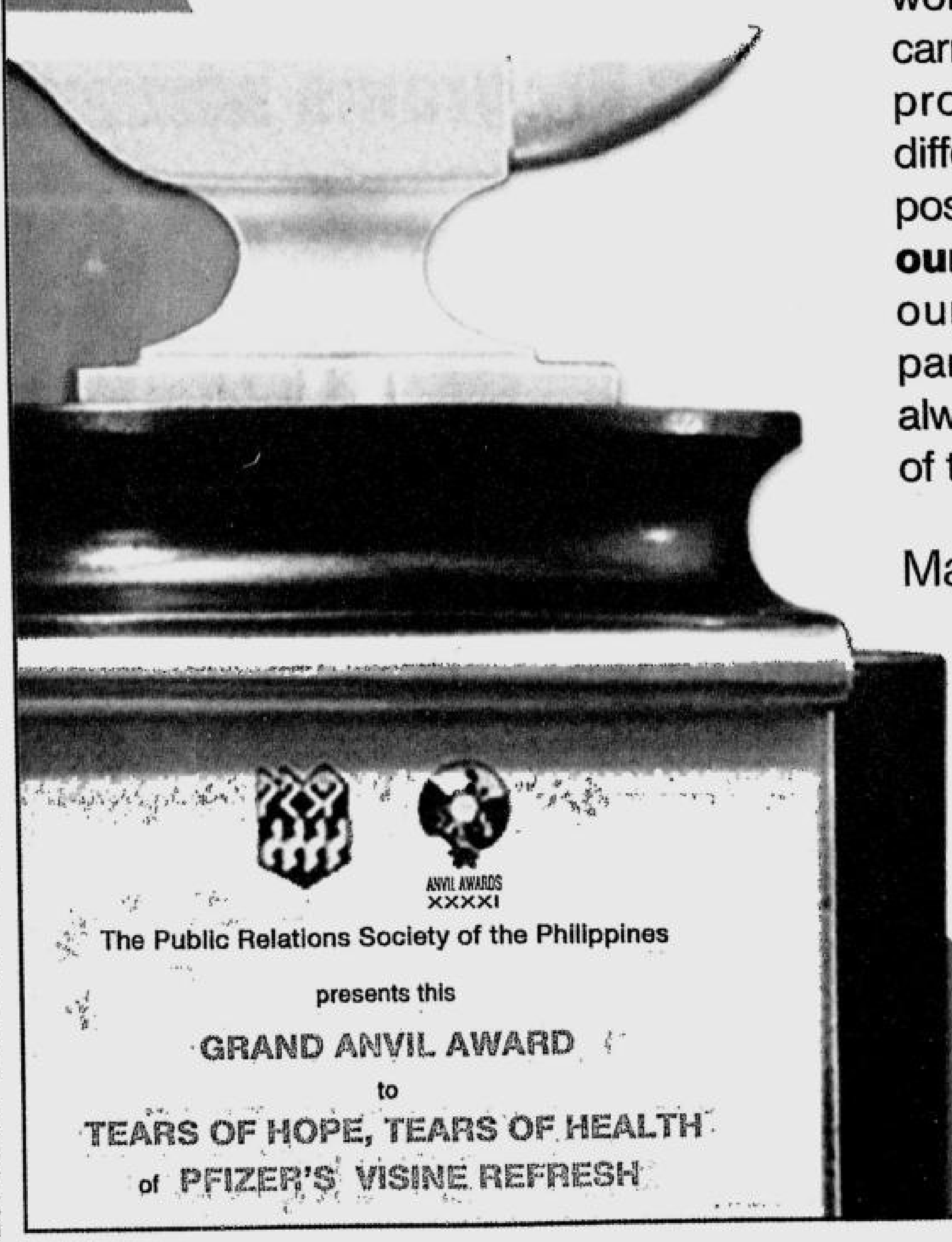
Pfizer lives out its tradition of serving the community through groundbreaking partnership programs involving major stakeholders in government, medical community, academe and industry. These programs signify our sincere commitment to making a significant and sustainable difference in the community by addressing healthcare concerns.

In recent years, we have also been at the forefront of promoting public safety by providing leadership and resources for advocacy campaigns that reaffirm our commitment of protecting the health of Filipinos.

Being recognized for these works truly encourages us to carry on and create meaningful programs that will make a difference in as many lives as possible. We share this award - **our third Grand Anvil** - with our employees and our partners, whose support has always been vital to the success of these programs.

Maraming Salamat Po!

Dapat Sulit.
Pfizer


ANVIL AWARDS
XXXXI
The Public Relations Society of the Philippines
presents this
GRAND ANVIL AWARD
to
TEARS OF HOPE, TEARS OF HEALTH
of PFIZER'S VISINE REFRESH

Synopsis and Photos of 41st Awardees

Anvil Tools

Jun Lozano executive vice president receiving the Anvil Award of Merit for De La Salle Lipa for their 2004 - 2005 annual report entitled 'Ad Vincula: The President's Report'. It contained the accomplishments of De La Salle - Lipa's academic and service units. It sought to reinforce its community's linkages and bonds by showcasing De La Salle Lipa's drive for excellence and its integrity in keeping its audience well-informed.

Iris Cariaga senior senior PR manager , Tina Abesamis, PR executive Joy Mirasol, - PR executive receiving the award for The 23rd SEA Games Song 'We're All Just One' entered by Rene Nieva for the Philippine 23rd SEA Games. Played throughout the games until the closing ceremonies, it kept the fires of friendly competition and unity burning. This song also embodied 'One Heritage, One Southeast Asia', the theme of the 23rd SEA Games.

Mila Balabag creative director, Agnes Cristobal copy writer, Jose Mario Bunuag Commissioner BIR are receiving the award for E-VAT TVCs 'Toyang' and 'Teacher' Entered by Corporate Image Dimensions for the Department of Finance. Through two creatively produced TVCs, it fostered an improved general opinion for E-VAT. It also aided the finance department in disseminating mechanics-specific information to a more open public. May Resulta TVCs entered by Corporate Image Dimensions. Using a series of TVCs tied up with trade organizations, it presented the achievements of the Philippine government in its socio-economic programs. It gave Filipinos a chance to positively view the efforts of the government in improving micro finance for small businesses, patubig, trabaho, RORO and free education.

Award of Excellence

Melvin Abanto - VP corporate affairs , Benel T. Lagua - president and COO are shown receiving in behalf of Small Business Guarantee and Financial Corp for their 2004 annual report entitled 'The Creative Worker for the Creative Economy'. It captured the spirit that made small and medium sized enterprises produce brilliant unexpected results despite the economic challenges of 2004. It also featured how the Small Business Corporation provided the necessary muscle to help SMEs thrive in a very competitive market.

Litz Santana - public affairs division head is shown receiving the Anvil Award in behalf of Quezon Power Philippines for its 2005 calendar. This calendar captures the purity and innocence of childhood through one-of-a-kind photographs of children who are at work or at play in the fields, rivers, falls, roads, and plazas of Mauban, Quezon. It speaks of how home-grown values help a child become an empowered citizen of the world in the future. Quezon Power Philippines for its quarterly newsletter titled 'Tinig ng Kaunlaran'. Written in the old Tagalog dialect used by Quezon natives to cater to its main reading public-the residents of Mauban, Quezon, this 8-paged newsletter effectively features columns and articles detailing the companies community and sustainable development programs. Quezon Power Philippines for its brochure entitled 'The Power to Change Lives'. It illustrated, through words and photographs, how the company continues to be guided by its 4 core values of integrity, teamwork, entrepreneurship, and corporate social responsibility. Quezon Power Philippines for the Educational Component of their Sustainable Development Program. This program sponsors deserving young people to pursue college or skills education. It also sponsors the additional training of public school teachers to provide the children of Mauban, Quezon with equal opportunity for quality education.

Bronze Anvil

PLDT executives Ramon Isberto - corporate affairs head, Horace Lavides - media services head, Sennen Lacsamana - media section head, Jun Samballilo - media senior publications assistant, Anthony Alcantara - media senior publications assistant and Evelyn del Rosario, community relations manager with their winning victorious smiles and toasts for the Bronze Anvil Award for PLDT for their monthly publication Access Magazine. Described by its readers as classy, smashing, and intelligent, ACC:ESS Magazine is a powerful vehicle where the company keeps its employees informed with the latest in PLDT. Its style and presentation exemplify the company's paradigm of innovation and hard work. PLDT for their 2005 Desk Calendar. Through Roni Santiago's classic Baltic and Co. comic strip and words of wisdom from TOYM awardees, PLDT Group employees were treated to a calendar that was both fun and inspiring at the same time. It was designed to encourage PLDT employees to have a productive and fun-filled year. PLDT for their 2004 annual report entitled 'Ahead of the Curve'. Its 140 pages moved within the premise that an annual report with quality information was the pipeline for good investor relations. Thus, its extensive Financials section reflected the company's desire to communicate clearly and effectively with its stockholders. PLDT for their 2005 Diary. A planner that uniquely looked back into the past as it narrated PLDT's 75 years of contributing to the growth of the country through innovative services that helped spur economic developments.

Jose Mario Bunuag Commissioner BIR receiving the award for BIR File-Your-Income-Tax TVC Campaign 'Negosyante' and 'ITR' Entered by Corporate Image Dimensions for the Bureau of Internal Revenue. Its two TVCs successfully showcased the benefits of being a conscientious tax payer to one's business reputation and the critical necessity of having an ITR to be able to transact business with public and private entities.

Noel Albano, Deputy Secretary General for Media of the House of Representatives is shown receiving in behalf of House of Representatives for their Newsletter entitled 'The Forum'. As a face-off for mainstream media's representation of issues and personalities in Congress, this publication consciously aims to present a clear, sober and factual report of the happenings in The House of Representatives. Since its first publication, it has become an authoritative record of the Congress's trials and triumphs. House of Representatives for its proposal entitled Debt-for-Equity in Millennium Development Goals Projects. This proposal seeks to convert half of the debt owed by 100 heavily-indebted countries into equity in sustainable development projects identified with the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals. It offers both lender and debtor nations a viable way out of the debt trap for the world's most heavily-indebted middle-income countries.

Awards of Excellence for PR Programs

The City Government of Pasay for their program Community-Based Monitoring System, Implemented in 201 Barangays. A program that provided valuable data regarding poverty in Pasay, its gathered information paved the way for a more efficient implementation of appropriate intervention methods to combat poverty in Pasay city.

Meralco Foundation Inc for its scholars recruitment campaign for its Industrial Technician Program. An annual series of activities aimed at selecting 150 scholars that will undergo its Industrial Technician program. Interested and qualified applicants are sought through numerous school visits and career talks. The very rigid process involved only seems to encourage applicants to try their mettle so as to belong to the chosen few.

The City of Parañaque for its citywide cleanliness drive entered by PLDT. Together with establishing the proper infrastructures for its cleanliness drive, the city of Parañaque used all possible information tools to educate and discipline its constituents in the proper disposal and segregation of waste. All its efforts resulted in a much healthier and cleaner Parañaque.

Father and son duo of Rey Langit and his junior for the Hip TV Inc for Kasangga Mo ang Langit Foundation. Through its television program, it created an awareness of the plight of the Tau't Batu group, whose surviving members were plagued with malaria. Its efforts also included a medical mission and an educational campaign in Subic, Zambales, where a high number of malaria cases were also reported.

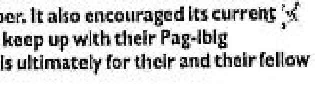
Noel Isberto - president /executive director is shown receiving the award in behalf of GlaxoSmithKline's Family Vaccines Program. This campaign effectively induced a shift in the public's perception of the value of vaccination. It also reinforced GlaxoSmithKline's role as a caring partner that provides valuable health information and as a trustworthy provider of reliable, safe and effective vaccines.

The Enchanted Kingdom for its Celebration of 10 Magical Years entered by Ruby Communications Consultancy. This was a year-long series of activities that successfully increased park attendance and revenues. It included a jaw-dropping fireworks display, a comic magazine, and a movie starring Ramon 'Bong' Revilla. This campaign also highlighted Enchanted Kingdom's journey over the past ten years as the country's only world-class theme park.

Toyota Motors Philippines for its Toyota Classics event entitled A world of Harmony. This event stars world-renowned orchestras who perform side by side Filipino artists of classical music. It promotes the appreciation of arts and culture and, at the same time, proudly showcases the brilliance of Filipino talent. Its ticket sales are donated to specific organizations chosen by Toyota Motors. Toyota Motors Philippines for Brainstorm! The Toyota Vios Integrated Marketing Communications Challenge. It invited young people from different universities and colleges to participate in Toyota's commendable new approach in improving its brand. The program sought a more personal and interactive level of market penetration through the fresh, brilliant ideas of its youthful participants.

Mayor Evelio R. Leonardia with Mrs. Liza Leonardia, Eli Tajanlangit of the Masskara Festival 2005 are shown receiving the award in behalf of The City Government of Bacolod for its successful celebration of its Masskara Festival 2005. As the front act for the ceremonies of the 23rd SEA Games, this annual festival became much more than the usual fiesta activity. The involvement of Bacolod's artists turned Masskara 2005 into an arts festival that strengthened the position of this city in the tourism map. The City of Bacolod for its Enhancement of its One-Stop-Shop or Tax Revenue and Collection System. To complement it upgraded centralized system of processing and issuing business permits, the city gave out simple yet effective information slips to the public. This slips contained instructions on what to do and where to go in the municipal office for certain services. It facilitated a very efficient delivery of service advantageous to all concerned. The City Government of Bacolod for its Indigenous Supplementary Mixture Feeding Program or the Insumix Program. This program aimed and succeeded in improving the nutritional status of undernourished schoolchildren through supplementary feeding. Through it, many schoolchildren of Bacolod have a better chance of reaching their full potential.

Florentino Espana, Jr., vice president management services group, is shown in behalf of Pag-ibig Fund for its Tapat sa Pag-ibig, Tapat sa Kapwa Campaign. This 7advertising and promotions program helped promote public awareness on the various services and benefits of being a Pag-ibig member. It also encouraged its current members to diligently keep up with their Pag-ibig obligations because it is ultimately for their and their fellow members' own good.



Warning issued amidst a plethora of public awards

Hallmark of real and bogus awards

LAST MONTH, NO LESS THAN A RESPECTED WELL established professional organization of many years had no recourse but to circulate to the wide diversity of business aggrupation about the "excellence honors" which has been widely swallowed by large number of business establishments and entities, estimated to be in the vicinity of 1,000 entries who paid their fees as soon as they were notified of their selection as awardees.

Without even divulging any criteria in the matter of award selection or the how the evaluation and judging was conducted by focus group or by a committee of one person, the awardee's thirst and hunger for public honors motivate them to cough out sums of money "in five figures to the operators of such "honors" for sale.

Here are some hallmarks of spurious or bogus awards which are actually millstones displayed on the neck of those who unwittingly lavished with pride their honors acquired for valuable cash in return.

1. Check out thoroughly the integrity and competence of the organizers and the persona of those behind the search for excellence. Some of these don't even ring a bell or even a tiny squeak. But they generate publicity mileage with the indispensable cooperation of some paid press sectors in the dark side. If you are not convince of the background of these men and women, one should stay away from this honors for lobby or sale.

2. Check out the judges profile. Some may just be lobbying for their clients management. If many of these judges come from the same ranks of the organization, and not from an independent multi-sectoral representation, stay out of the awards, your company may just be an accessory to what is actually an annual self bestowed honors reserved primarily to endear the top executives to management perception.

3. Judging should be individually first before any en banc evaluations for the ranking of winners. Again, one should not be deceived by the volumes of advanced publicity on the award since many of such bogus awards are projected as worthy due to the indispensable cooperation of some media partners in the negative side of journalism.

4. Awards notice done by spurious "focus groups " is a red light to be avoided. But nevertheless, there are hundreds of firms who are really starving for such doubtful recognition, and even go to the extent to display this in their ads and billboards.

So beware. Caveat emptor. When the signs of such suspected awards are detected avoid it. It's a millstone tied to the corporate neck. It's a badge of shame and a liability to a company's reputation.

On the other hand a well earned award done independently will enhance corporate and brand equity, integrity, corporate citizenship and the public's abiding faith in the leadership of such organized private and public entities in Metro Manila or in key cites of the Philippines.

He changed the face of PRSP

By Winnie S. Ferrer

MY FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH the Public Relations Society of the Philippines was over ten years ago when I was requested by a college friend then the managing editor of the nationwide broadsheets to do the supplement of the Anvil Awards.

I am a PR practitioner too so it tickled my interest but I concluded that these awards were for the high end corporations. So for that moment, I just shelved PRSP in my memory banks.

I cannot say exactly when or the circumstances that led to my acquaintance with Vic del Fierro but I know that he knew my father and uncle and we had common friends.

I was asked to emcee for him during his Silver Wedding Anniversary and it was only three years ago when I started seeing more of him and got involved in a coalition for consumer protection. Vic is the man behind the movement of the Pepsi 349 who has risked life and limb for the rights of the consumers, so this was nothing new to him.

It was only late last year that I learned that he had been chosen to chair the Anvil Awards and had been requested to continue for the incoming year when he asked me to do the creative for the flyer which contained the various categories as well as the guidelines for joining the competition.

For the very first time and amidst so much controversy, Vic was able to change the face of the PRSP Anvil Awards. He decided to open the categories and widen the scope to include national and local government units, environmental concerns, and non-government project proponents.

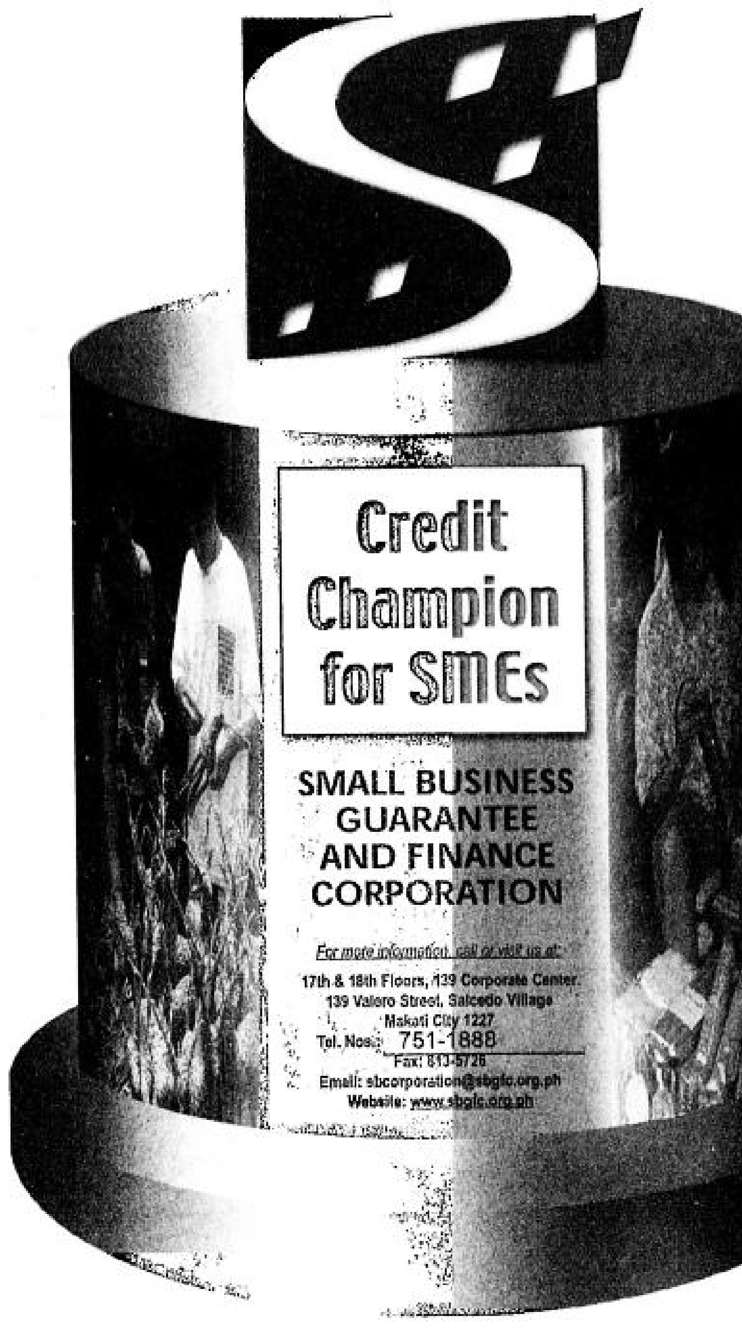
For the very first time, he was able to steer the PRSP away from the usual self-limiting corporate glitz and position it to more level ground accessible to the everyday Filipino.

For the very first time, he was able to open wide a front where achievements which otherwise would have remained unnoticed, would now gain recognition and urge its proponents and so many others to strive in their response to social responsibility at home, in the workplace, and in the community.

For the very first time, he was able to spread the good news about Filipinos in spite of the arid economic atmosphere and the negative accounts of daily goings-on in the nationwide dailies.

For one brief shining moment, one could feel the pride that he was a Filipino and part of nation which could do so much to improve his life and the lives of his countrymen.

Thank you, Vic, so many needed that well -deserved pat on the back!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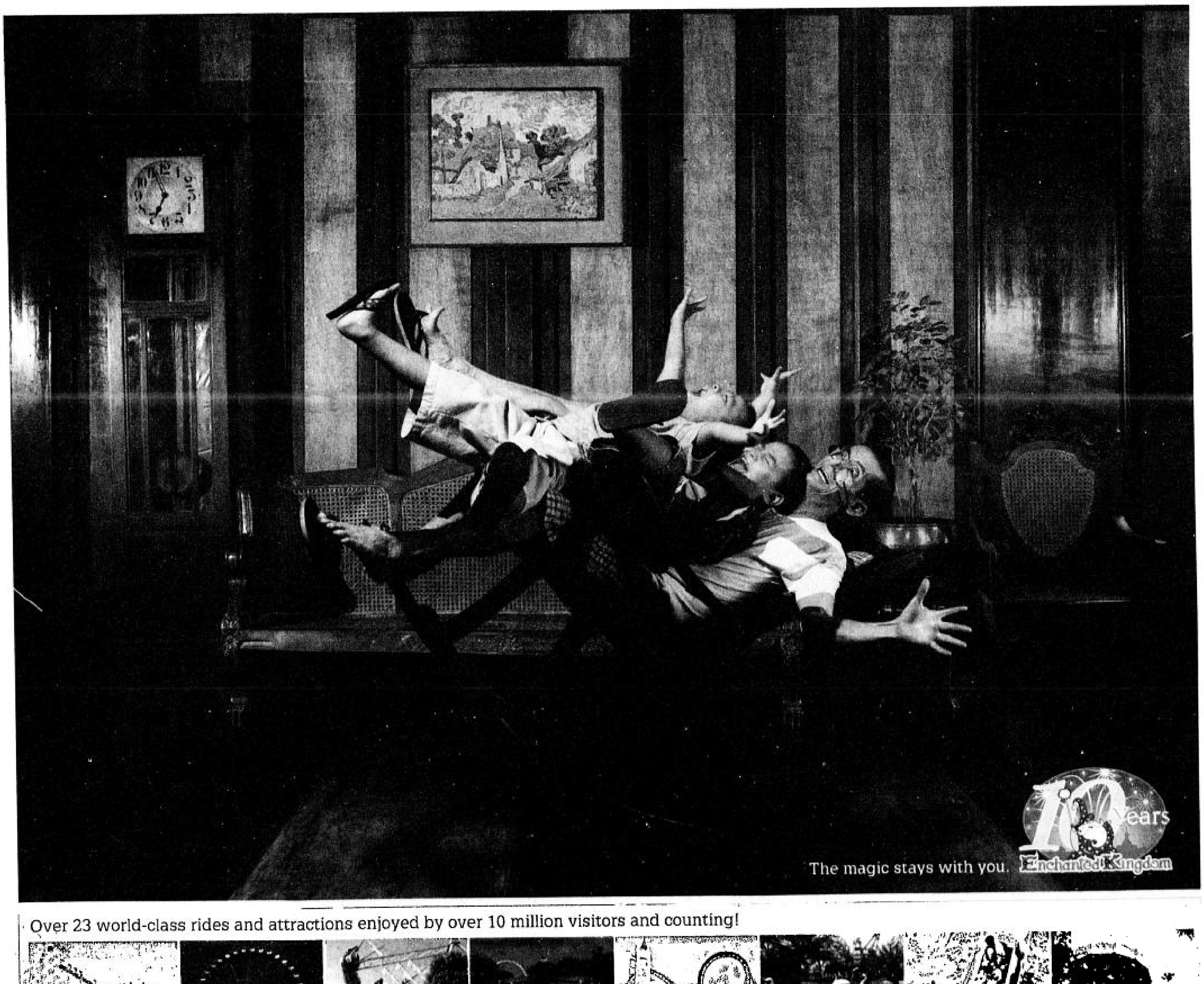
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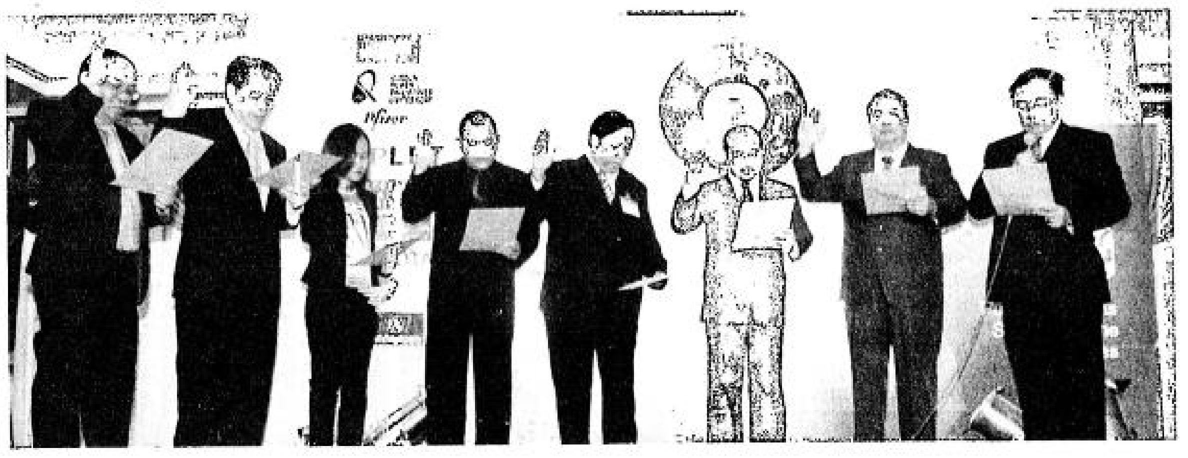
ROAD MAP & DIRECTION OF THE NEW PRSP BOARD

Internalize the mantra of corporate social responsibility and corporate citizenship



The new dynamic and committed PRSP board takes their oath of office before former Senator Heherson Alvarez (extreme right) , chairman of the Anvil jurors. From left: Juan P. Dayang, vice president for international affairs, Winston Marbella, ex-officio director, Catherine Trumata, auditor, Larry Zurita, treasurer; Vicente del Fierro Jr., president and 41st Anvil Awards chairman, Noel Albano, director and chairman of the 2006 National Public Relations Congress; and Ronnie Preza, secretary. Not in photo are: Antonio Samson, vice president for external affairs; Ulysses Antonio C. Rivera, director and Wivina Ferrer, director.

SHORTLY AFTER THEIR INDUCTION DURING the Anvil Award presentation, the newly inducted board of directors of the Public Relations Society of the Philippines mapped out its direction geared towards the promotions of corporate social responsibility executed with flair and style to various private and government entities joining the growing rosters of members nationwide attracted to its social direction to be pursued during their new board incumbency.

Such gestures should be in flesh and form beyond rhetorics, reams of publicity clippings, self-serving advertorial ads, media spins, and deceit anchored on a cloud of smoke and imagery which hallmarked the practice of public relations and communications management as evolved in the Philippines in recent years.

For the first time since its founding in 1957, the Public Relations Society of the Philippines will have as President a leading Filipino consumers advocate and fighter, with a natural bias for corporate social responsibility and corporate neighborliness, instead of a glitzy play of corporate imagery, riveted on a cloud of smoke.

In his vision for the PRSP, Del Fierro said that henceforth, the basic essential of public relations should be enshrined in the cornerstone of authentic good deeds to enhance corporate integrity, and build a sustaining dam of positive reputation and legacy for any private or public organization and foundation before its defined stakeholders who becomes its partners in national development.

Vic del Fierro Jr., is a veteran PR practitioner with nearly four decades of experience. He joined the PRSP in 1968 when he was then PR director of Grant Advertising, an American ad agency, and handled a slew of Philippine companies and multinational and regional Public Relations accounts in Asia and special projects assignments.

He started his public relations career at J. Walter Thompson (Philippines) in 1965 while still in his sophomore years in journalism at the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters of the University of Santo Tomas where he supported his studies as a free lance journalist (he is a son of an institution in Philippine journalism), and as a PR writer in the public information office of the Social Welfare Administration.

He joined his first Filipino agency - J. Romero & Associates as public relations director in 1971 and made the PR department one of the main stream revenue vehicles with the number of PR clients and projects he handled including Binibining Pilipinas, Bank of America, B. F. Goodrich, Philippine Airlines and Westinghouse.

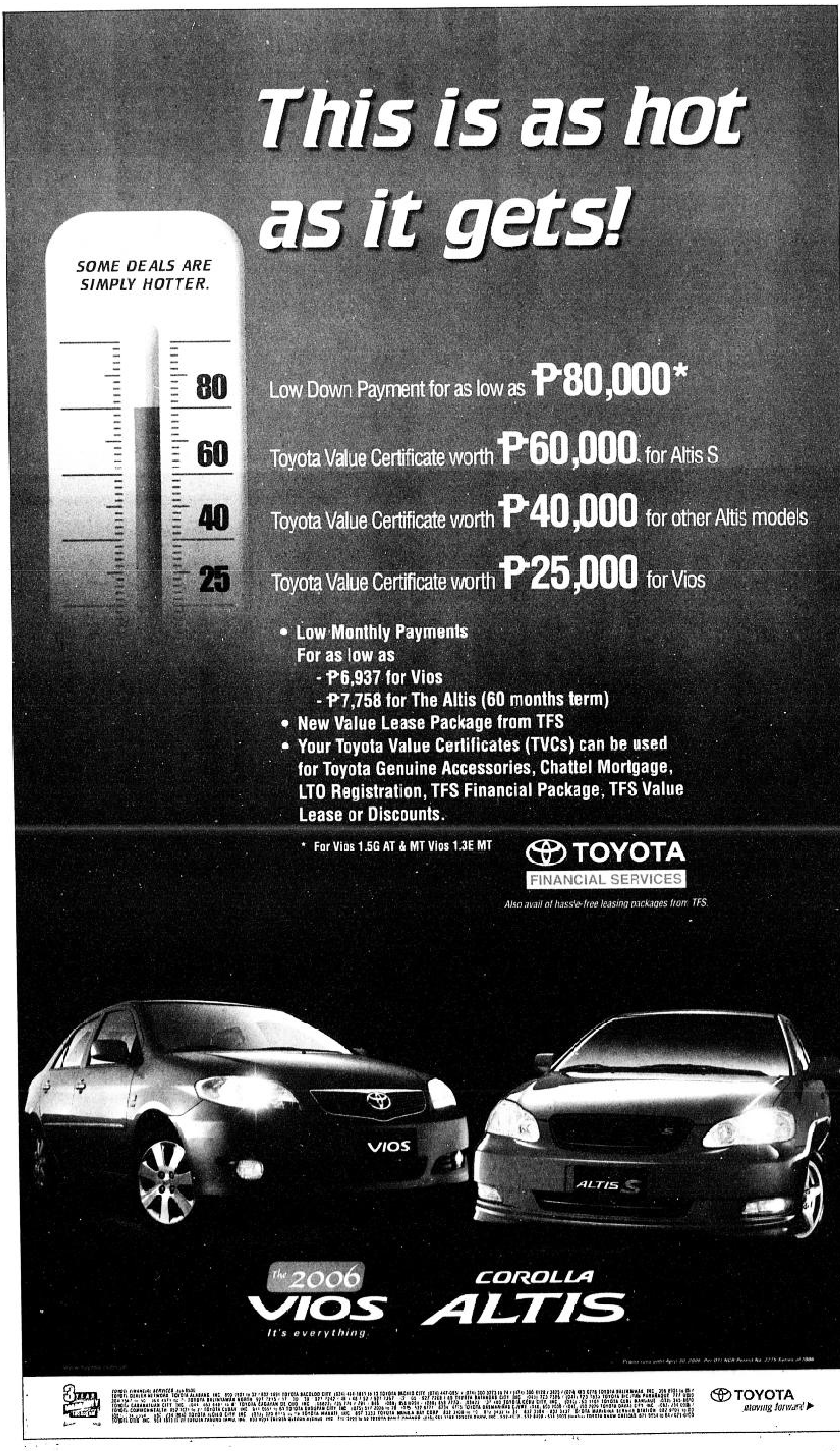
In his neophyte years in Public Relations, he picked up bits and pieces of valuable lessons and pointers in public relations, advertising, promotions integrated marketing communications, social marketing, political public relations, crisis management and lobbying from respected names in PR, advertising and marketing legends like John Lasley, Felixberto Bustos, Benjo Osias, Domingo Abadilla, Baldomero Toto Olivera, Caring Nuguid, Pete Teodoro, Jose Aspiras, Emcy Corteza Tinsay, Antonio Benedicto, Ronnie Pasola, Ramon Manalac Rene Bas, Cip Roxas, Javier Calero, Lyle Little, Ernesto del Rosario, Pio Acampado, to name a few.

His extra heavy professional commitment for many years in PR & marketing consultancy, legislative lobbyist, political PR in the Senate, public issue management and consumer advocacy compelled a low profile engagement in the PRSP for many years which included participation in major international conferences hosted by Consumers International based in the UK, the United Nations Conference On Trade & Development UNCTAD in Geneva Switzerland.

The Committee on Trade of both Philippine Senate and Congress has been regularly inviting Del Fierro on various public issues and advocacies affecting consumers in the Philippines. He advocates harmonious balance of common interests to the consumers, management and other stakeholders.

The new PRSP president, a veteran PR practitioner and a free lance journalist since the late 60s is also a public issue lobbyist in Congress, and an internationally acknowledged consumer advocate who gained global recognition when he stood up in behalf of Philippine consumers who were duped and victimized in a deceptive nationwide promotions by a U.S. based transnational food and beverage giant who has been relentlessly avoiding its corporate social responsibility at all costs to thousands of poor consumers for the past 14 years. Del Fierro is an advertising innovator. He introduced Transit Media in the Philippines that specializes in cost effecient high impact advertising in buses, taxis, jeepney, school buses, tricycles in Metro Manila and key cities nationwide.

The other officers of the PRSP include Juan P. Dayang, vice president for external affairs and president and pillar of the Publisher Asociation of the Philippines (PAPI), Antonio Samson, vice president internal affairs and chairman of the Advertising Board, Ronnie Preza, secretary, Larry Zurita treasurer, Catherrine Tumata, auditor, Ulysses Antonio Rivera, director and Wivina Ferrer as director and Noel Albano, deputy secretary general for media of the House of Representatives, director and chairman of the National PR Congress slated in the middle of 2006.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